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Catechisms

TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

TO THE

CATECHISM

A PRACTICAL EXPLANATION OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE FOR SCHOOL AND PULPIT

WITH SPECIAL REGARD AND MINUTE DIRECTIONS FOR THE

CATECHIZING OF CHILDREN

By the REV. A. URBAN

Vol. I.—THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF FAITH

With over 3,500 Questions and Answers

NEW YORK
JOSEPH F. WAGNER

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FOREWORD.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me."—Mark x. 14.

To the teacher there can be no more exalted, no more attractive part of his functions, than the imparting of the holy truths of Religion to the young; to take, as it were, the place of our dear Lord Himself, in moulding the young minds, and guiding them on, by careful religious and moral training, to the path that leads to salvation.

Teaching Religion is not an easy matter. This is an admitted fact, and numerous useful handbooks have been devised for the help of the teacher of Catechism. Of all these handbooks, however, there is, to the knowledge of the writer, not one that pays sufficient, if any, attention to PRACTICAL CATECHIZING beyond offering some advice on a method for the same. Catechizing, it should be emphasized, is in no degree less important, no less essential, than the presenting and explaining of the subject dealt with, which must necessarily precede. This fact has in principle been long acknowledged in secular instruction, where "*quiz*" classes are considered an important and indispensable part of courses in the branches of science, and their instructors are well provided with "*quiz*" books.

In order to make Catechizing thorough and fruitful, it must be systematical, and must closely correspond with the matter and the manner of the lesson. The part of Catechizing requires the same attention, the same skill, experience and preparation, as does the other part of instruction, the Defining or Explaining.

The present work, besides intended to supply the teacher with an exhaustive explanation of Catholic Doctrine, in language suitable for the school, pays especial attention to Catechizing, and makes an effort to facilitate this important task for the teacher by supplementing each lesson with an extensive and complete schedule of questions and answers, fully and effectually rehearsing the substance of the lesson. The answers have been added, in a simple and concise form, for the convenience of the teacher; they are not supposed to be learned by heart by the pupils.

The present volume confines itself to the Catholic Doctrine of Faith; two other volumes on the Doctrine of Morals, and on the Means of Grace will (D. V.) shortly follow.

I beg leave to express the hope that my effort may be found of some use to the teacher of Catechism.

THE AUTHOR.

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AN EXPLANATION OF THE CATECHISM.

FOR THE MIDDLE AND UPPER CLASSES OF PAROCHIAL AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

I.

The Existence of God.

Dear Children:—You attend school so as to be instructed in all that is good and useful. Now the most *important* instruction is the instruction about *God,* for it treats of the Supreme Being, His perfections and revelations and teaches us how we should live piously and well upon earth, that we may one day enjoy the bliss of heaven with God. If you desire to attain to this great happiness you ought to pay great attention during religious instruction, take to heart the good lessons you there receive, preserve them all your life, and let them bear fruit a thousand fold. We shall begin the religious instruction with the doctrine of the existence of God.

When any one builds a new house his first care is directed towards placing that house upon *solid ground,* which we call the *foundation.* The firmer the ground or the foundation is, so much the more firm

will the house be that is built upon it. He who neglects to build his house upon firm ground will soon find that his house falls down again.

Our holy religious teaching is built upon a foundation, and that is the belief in *the existence of God,* of which we shall speak to-day in the first religious instruction. By faith in the existence of God is understood that we firmly and undoubtingly believe that there is one God, an invisible, most perfect and Supreme Being.

Without this belief in the existence of God the whole structure of our religious teaching would fall to pieces, for whosoever does not believe in the existence of God will not believe in God's revelations. A man who does not believe in the existence of God will not fear God; neither will he keep his commandments, but will sin without fear. You see then that in reality our entire religious teaching rests upon the belief in the existence of God.

In order to found this belief firmly within you I will to-day bring before you the *proofs* of the existence of God. There are *six* principal ones, namely:

1. The creation of the world.
2. The preservation of the world.
3. The order of created things above and below.
4. The voice of conscience.
5. Revelation.
6. The circumstance that all the peoples of the earth believe in a Supreme Being.

The first proof, then, is the creation of the world. Children, you all like to be in the open air, you rejoice in the beautiful flowers, and in the song of the birds. You enjoy playing in the green fields and meadows; in summer time you like to sit under the shade trees, and you like to look for wild berries. Many of you have been out in the open nights, and seen the gentle moon and the stars shining. Dear children, it is not sufficient to look at created things in a superficial manner, and to think: this is a flower, that is a bird, that is a tree, there the moon, and the stars. But we must reflect whence or *from whom* they all came. Now it could never occur to a reasonable man that all these things existed of themselves. For instance, no house could rise up of itself. Masons, carpenters, joiners, locksmiths, plasterers have to be actively employed. If then not even a house, however small it might be, could erect itself, how is it pos-

sible that the great wide world and everything that it contains could exist of itself?

Now if it is an assured fact that nothing can exist of itself we might ask: Was everything that exists created by man?

We will take five, ten, twenty, fifty, or a hundred workmen, and let them singly or all together make a flower, a blade of grass, a fly, or even a grain of sand. What would they accomplish? Nothing. Instead of a hundred workmen, let us take a thousand or all the artisans of the whole world; we will give them everything that they require; would they be able to produce the tiniest of creatures? Certainly not. Now if the visible creation, that is to say, created things, do not exist of themselves, and all men of the entire earth are unable to create anything, there must be a Being who produced the visible creation. Behold, children, this Supreme Being, the Creator of all things, is God.

The second proof of the existence of God is: the preservation of the world. Whatever has been placed there or will be placed there by man is only for a time. Things even which appeared to have been made for centuries have perished. But what God has created will last as long as it seems good to Him. Although the beauties of nature pass away every year, still this perishableness is only temporary; for after a few months nature awakens again from the frozen sleep of winter to new glory and beauty.

The third proof of the existence of God we will also take from the visible natural creation. By attentively observing the works of God we shall see that one creature is always subordinate to another. Man is above the animals, animals above plants, plants above stones, living creatures above inanimate ones, and the more perfect above the less perfect. We have every right to conclude from this that a creator must be above all creatures, that above all imperfect, defective, earthly beings there must be a supreme perfect Being, namely, God. The fourth proof consists in the voice of conscience. If, for instance, some one wants to do wrong, he hears an interior voice which warns him not to do so. If he does not listen to this warning and sins, then the interior voice reproaches him bitterly; he feels within him an indescribable fear and perturbation; he is afraid without knowing of whom, and peace and quiet have vanished from his heart. But when any one has done good he feels an interior contentment within his heart, a delight and a happiness which it is impossible to describe.

Behold, children, this inward voice which praises or blames us is conscience. There must, therefore, be a Supreme Being who has placed this voice within us, and this Supreme Being is God.

The fifth proof of the existence of God is revelation. God has revealed Himself to men; that is to say, He has made Himself known to them. God said to our first parents in Paradise: "Eat not the fruit of the forbidden tree. If you eat therefrom you shall die." When, notwithstanding this, they sinned, God made known to them His displeasure, and ordained for each one the punishment deserved. Later God revealed Himself to Cain. "Why art thou so angry and why is thy countenance fallen? Behold, if thou doest good, thou art as dear to Me as thy brother Abel."

Furthermore God revealed Himself to Noe: "Make thee an ark, for I will bring the waters of a great flood upon the earth to destroy all flesh." To Abraham God revealed Himself several times: "Walk before Me," said God to him, "and be perfect." When Abraham was about to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, to God, God said to him: "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be filled with blessings. All the people of the earth shall be blessed in thee."

God revealed Himself to the Israelites in the law through Moses, to whom He gave the ten commandments upon Mount Sinai.

In the new law God revealed Himself to men by His Son Jesus Christ.

But if God has revealed Himself to men, there must then be a God, for only a being who is really present can reveal Himself.

The sixth proof of the existence of God is this, that all the peoples of the whole world believe in the existence of a Supreme Being. The savages call Him Manitou (the great spirit), the Mohammadens call Him Allah, the Jews call Him Elohim, Adonai, Jehovah, but we Christians call Him God. The ancient Greeks and Romans even believed in numerous gods, because they had the idea that the operations of the Supreme Being were so infinite that one God was not sufficient for them.

There are people who to this day look upon the sun and the fire as gods and worship these elements, so profoundly is the belief in the existence of a Supreme Being founded amongst all the peoples of the earth. Even if the idea of a Supreme Being is different with many people, obscure and confused, still this fact is a proof to us that there must be a Supreme Being, there must be a God. For this

reason the Apostles' Creed (which contains briefly everything that a Christian ought to believe) begins with the words: "I believe in God," that is to say: I believe that there is a Supreme Being.

I have, then, by incontestable proofs proved to you the existence of God.

Notwithstanding this, and although the visible world alone is sufficient to prove this belief, there are still men who are so blinded as to deny the existence of God. They are called atheists. It is hardly credible that a man could go so far. Holy Writ calls these men fools, when it says: "The fool only says in his heart: There is no God."

I would willingly have kept silent on this subject, but it is possible that later in life you may meet persons of this kind. I consider it my duty to draw your attention to this, and to warn you against associating with them. Believe them not, and accept none of their maxims! Be all the more faithful and firm in your belief in the existence of God. This faith will encourage you to learn to know God better, the knowledge of God will lead you to the love of God, the love of God to be obedient to Him, as well as to fear Him. The fear of God will preserve you from every sin and be an incentive to virtue and piety. Thus your belief in the existence of God will become the basis and foundation of your eternal salvation. Now so as to convince myself that you were attentive during the instruction to-day, and that you have understood and observed everything, we will have a repetition of it all.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day during the religious instruction? Of belief in the existence of God.

2. What does it mean to believe in the existence of God? It means to believe firmly that there is a God, a Supreme Being.

3. How did I denote the belief in the existence of God? As the basis and foundation of our holy religion.

4. Why is the belief in the existence of God the basis or foundation of our holy religious teaching? Because our whole religious teaching rests upon this belief.

5. How explain this? He who does not believe in the existence of God does not believe in revelation and in the commandments of God.

6. Will any one who does not believe in the commandments of God keep the same? No, they will not keep them.

7. And what would they draw down upon themselves by sin? Eternal damnation.

8. What did I bring forward so as to confirm and strengthen within you the belief in the existence of God? You brought forward several proofs.

9. Give the exact number of these? You brought forward six different proofs.

10. Which was the first? The creation of the visible world.

11. What is understood by the visible world? We understand thereby all visible created things.

12. Mention some visible created things? The sun, moon, and stars, mountain and valley, land and sea, springs, brooks, rivers, men and animals, plants and stones.

13. Who created all these? God created all these.

14. Could these things exist of themselves? No; they could not exist of themselves.

15. Why not? Because the least thing could not exist of itself.

16. When a house is being built what workmen have to be actively employed upon it? Masons, bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, plasterers, etc., etc., have to be actively employed.

17. Could the whole of creation, the boundless universe have existed of itself? No.

18. Perhaps the visible world was made by men and artisans? No; it was not made by men and artisans.

19. How do you know this? Because neither one nor several artisans are capable of creating the least thing in the visible world.

20. If then the visible world neither existed of itself nor was created by man, what do we conclude? That there is a Supreme Being who created everything.

21. Who is this Supreme Being? This Supreme Being is God.

22. What was the second proof that I brought forward for the existence of God? The preservation of the world.

23. What does it mean that God preserves the world? It means that God lets the world continue as He wills and as long as He wills.

24. How long has the world lasted? Many thousands of years.

25. How much longer will it continue? As long as it pleases to God.

26. How in comparison are all things made and produced by man? They soon perish despite the will of man.

27. Yes; but the beauties of nature perish every year? This change is only a temporary change, because in the Spring nature awakes again in all its glory and beauty.

28. By what arrangement of nature does God provide for the growth of the plants? By sunshine and rain.

29. Would one man, or all men together, be able to make the sun shine or bring down rain for one single hour? No! men are not able to do this.

30. Now if men cannot preserve the world, and all that it contains, what are we to conclude from this? That there must be a Supreme Being who preserves the whole world.

31. What was the third proof of the existence of God? That in the whole visible creation one being is always subordinate to the others.

32. Explain this to me by some examples? Man is above the animal, the animal above the plants, plants above stones, living creatures above inanimate ones, the perfect above the imperfect.

33. What ought we to conclude from this? That there must be a Supreme Being who is above all creatures.

34. Who is this Supreme Being? This Supreme and perfect Being is God.

35. What was the fourth proof which I gave you of the existence of God? The voice of conscience.

36. What does the voice of conscience say when we are tempted to do anything wrong? Our conscience warns us not to do the wrong.

37. What does our conscience say when we do good? It praises us.

38. What does our conscience say when we do wrong? It blames and reproaches us.

39. If then the voice of our conscience is sacred what do we conclude from this? That there is a Supreme Being who has placed this voice within us.

40. What was the fifth proof of the existence of God? That all the peoples of the earth believe in a Supreme Being.

41. What do the savages call the Supreme Being in whom they believe? They call him Manitou.

42. How many gods did the ancient Greeks and Romans believe in? They believed in numerous gods..

43. Why did they believe in numerous gods? Because they imagined that one Supreme Being was not sufficient to rule the whole world.

44. What visible objects are to-day worshipped as god by many heathens? The sun and fire.

45. What should we conclude from this that all the peoples of the earth believe in a Supreme Being? We should conclude that there must be a Supreme Being.

46. What was the sixth proof of the existence of God? The sixth proof is revelation.

47. What does this mean: God revealed Himself to men? God has made Himself known to men.

48. To whom, and where did God first reveal Himself? To our first parents in Paradise.

49. What did God say to them? God said: "Eat of all the trees in the garden but not of this tree. If you eat thereof you shall die."

50. When notwithstanding, our first parents transgressed the commandment of God, what did God make known to them? God made known to them His displeasure.

51. In what way? He punished them.

52. How did God reveal Himself to Cain? God said to him: "Why art thou so angry, and why is thy countenance fallen? Behold, if," etc.

53. When Cain in spite of God's warning sinned, and murdered his brother Abel, what did God make known to him? God made known to him His displeasure.

54. In what way? By announcing to him his punishment.

55. How did God reveal Himself to Noe? God said to him: "Build a large ark, for I have decided to destroy the whole human race."

56. How often did God reveal Himself to Abraham? God revealed Himself to Abraham several times.

57. What did God say to Abraham so as to preserve him from idolatry? "Go away from thy country and thy people into a land which I will show thee."

58. How did God reveal Himself to Abraham to try his obedience? God said: "Go up into Mount Morea and sacrifice thy son Isaac to Me as a burnt offering.

59. What promises did God make to the obedient Abraham? God said to him: "Because thou hast done this, I will bless thee, and thou shalt be filled with blessing. Through one of thy descendants the people of the whole earth shall be blessed."

60. Through whom did God reveal Himself to the people of Israel? Through Moses.

61. How did God reveal Himself through Moses? He gave him the ten commandments for the Israelites.

62. Can a Being who does not exist reveal itself? No, it cannot reveal itself.

63. Now if God really revealed Himself to man what is the consequence? That God must exist.

64. Do all men believe in the existence of a Supreme Being? No, there are men who deny the existence of God.

65. What are these men called? They are called atheists.

66. What does the Holy Writ call those men who do not believe in the existence of God? Holy Writ calls them fools.

67. What does that particular verse of Scripture say? "Only the fool says in his heart: There is no God."

68. Why does Holy Writ call such men fools? Because they behold the works of God, and yet they do not believe in Him.

69. And why further? Because such men on account of their unbelief are the cause of their own perdition.

70. What would you do, if in the course of your life you should happen to meet such unbelieving, atheistical persons? We should not listen to their conversation, nor be led astray by their unbelief.

71. In what ought you firmly believe? In the existence of God.

72. What will this belief encourage you to do? It will encourage us to learn to know God better.

73. To what will the knowledge of God lead you? To love and obey God.

74. What glorious reward will those men partake of who know God, love Him and serve Him? Everlasting bliss.

You see, then, from to-day's instruction that belief in the existence of God is the foundation of our entire religious teaching and the cause of our everlasting bliss.

II.

On the End and Aim; or, The Vocation of Man.

Dear Children:—In our religious instruction to-day we come to the doctrine of the end and aim of man. By aim is understood a point which we strive to reach directly or indirectly. The marksman aims at a target, the centre of which he strives to hit. Athletes erect for themselves a pole and aim to climb to its highest point.

Man, too, in this world has an aim set for him which he should endeavor to reach with all the powers of his mind and body. Instead of the end and aim of man, we can also say the vocation of man. For instance, everything created by God has a vocation, a purpose. You will understand this better in regard to sensible things. For instance, the sun is there to light the day, the moon is there to illumine the night, flowers are there to gladden man by the splendor of their colors or by their delicious perfume, the birds are there to rejoice us with their sweet songs or to be useful to us in other ways. Water quenches our thirst, it serves to wash, to cook, to bleach, etc., and you may take any created thing you like—each one has its purpose, its vocation.

Now we spoke in the last religious instruction of the subordination of created things, how man was above the animal, plants and stones, and was, therefore, a more noble creature and must have a nobler vocation. Regarding man's vocation the catechism says in answer to the question: "For what purpose are we upon earth?" "We are upon earth to know God, to love Him, to serve Him, and thereby to attain heaven."

These four vocations of man stand together in the most intimate union, because one proceeds from the other. Our first vocation, then, is this: "to know God." We can learn to know some one:

1. By his exterior, that is to say, his person.
2. Interiorly, that is to say, by his character and disposition.

We learn to know some one personally if we see him several times, and we learn to know his disposition and his character if we associate with him for any length of time. Now, God being a pure spirit and having no body, we can only learn to know Him by His Being, his perfections. God has given to man powers of the soul, reason and understanding wherewith he may learn to know Him.

Now what are the means by which we arrive at the knowledge of God?

1. By observing created things, the visible world.
2. By minding the voice of conscience.
3. By revelation.

It is, therefore, the affair of every Christian to draw out, as it were, the knowledge of God from three sources.

We are exhorted thereto by the holy Apostle Paul with these

words: "Be fruitful in every good work, and increase in the knowledge of God." Now, when we know God in His infinite perfections and in His boundless goodness, this knowledge of God leads us first of all to the *esteem* and *love of God.* He who knows God and His perfections well will esteem Him as the Supreme Good; he will have an ardent desire to please Him, and to be united with Him forever; that is, to possess Him eternally.

Out of this ardent love and sacrifice to God there arises of itself *obedience* towards God, for when we really love any one we gladly and willingly fulfil his wishes. This cheerful fulfilling of the divine will and laws, this unconditional subordination and subjection of man's will to the will of God is called *serving God.*

Therefore the Apostle St. John says: "We thereby see that we know God if we keep His commandments." And in another place Holy Scripture says: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is that loveth me." To serve God, therefore, is to do His holy will. But how should we serve God? Answer: Not from servile fear, but from childlike love. We ought not to be driven to serve God through fear of punishment, but from childlike love. So as to encourage men to fulfil the divine will, God promises them heaven, that is, to share with them that bliss which He Himself enjoys. Therefore the catechism asks further: "But what will happen to those who do not know God, who do not love Him and serve Him?" The answer is: "God will cast them off forever."

The punishment of the wicked consists, therefore, in this, that they are to be banished and rejected by God, and not only for a certain length of time, but forever, so that from this condition of banishment there is no deliverance. Therefore, you see, dear children, how necessary it is to know God, to love Him and serve Him.

For this reason Jesus said to Martha, who was more anxious about the household: "Thou art troubled about many things; only one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the better part."

One would think that all men would be reasonable enough to perceive the necessity of knowing God, of loving Him and serving Him, only this is not the case. If we look around us in the world we shall find that many persons strive more eagerly after other things than after the knowledge and love of God, namely, after the possession of temporal goods and the satisfying of their sensual desires and inclinations. Such people are called *children of the world,* and of their striving Holy Scripture says: "Everything that is in

he world is pride of the eye, pride of the flesh and the pomp of ife." I exhort you, children, not to be deluded by the example of hese worldly persons! All the pleasures of this world cannot pro-ure for you a true and lasting satisfaction. True happiness is ound only in the knowledge, love and service of God, as well as in nion with God. Just observe closely the life of these worldly per-ons. How they run and hunt after the possession of temporal goods! How they worry night and day so as to become rich and hereby obtain the means of enjoying themselves. And when they ave enjoyed all the pleasures which this world offers, what have hey left? Nothing. And if they had become possessed of all the wealth and treasures of this earth, can they take the least thing with them into eternity? Certainly not. But what care do these worldly people take of their immortal souls? Absolutely none. They never think about God; they do not pray to Him; they sel-dom or never go to church; they never listen to the Word of God; hey are lukewarm about receiving the sacraments; they go to Con-fession and Holy Communion seldom or not at all. Briefly, all spiritual life is dead within them. Their whole existence is nothing but work; eating, drinking and sleeping. They resemble the five foolish virgins, who wanted to light the bridegroom into the mar-riage, and took lamps with them, but no oil. By the oil of the wise virgins we understand the good works which we should practice, the good example which we should let shine before our fellowmen. But as the foolish virgins could not enter into the marriage, so also will those persons be shut out from the vision of God and the bliss of heaven, who their whole life long care only for their body and temporal affairs, but do nothing for their soul and their eternal welfare. The catechism asks further: "What must we do if we wish to know God, to love and serve Him?"

We should:

1. Believe everything that God has revealed.
2. Keep all the commandments God has commanded us to keep.
3. Make use of the means of grace God has ordained for our salvation.

The first requisite, then, is this: that we believe everything that God has revealed, for faith alone teaches us what our aim and voca-tion is upon earth, and what awaits us in the next life. However, faith without works (like a body without a soul) is dead. Conse-

quently our faith must bear fruit, and show itself in works. The fruit of a lively faith is the fulfilling of the will of God—obedience. For that reason we must, secondly, keep the commandments which God has commanded us to keep. Therefore, Jesus once spoke these memorable words: "Not everyone that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they who do the will of my Father." Now as weak men we are incapable of keeping the commandments of God by our own strength; we need supernatural assistance. Therefore, God comes to meet us with His graces. Those who wish to receive them must make use of those means of grace by which man is made a partaker in God's graces, namely, the holy sacraments.

The catechism asks further: "How do we get a right knowledge of the truths of divine faith, of the commandments, and of the means of grace?" The answer says: "By Christian instruction." To instruct means: To teach some one that which is useful and to make known something which was not known before.

Christian instruction is the teaching and informing of a Christian in all that which Jesus Himself taught and which He commanded His Church to teach until the end of the world.

Now, the book which contains Christian instruction is called the catechism. Catechism in a wider sense is a book in which any instruction is given by question and answers. There can, therefore, be a catechism on botany, entomology and so forth. Generally, however, by a catechism we mean a book which contains the Christian doctrine in questions and answers.

Of what, then, does the catechism treat?

It treats:

1. Of faith.
2. Of the commandments, and
3. Of the means of grace, namely, of the holy sacraments and prayer.

Accordingly the catechism is divided into three parts, of which the first contains the doctrines of faith, the second the doctrines of morals, and the third the doctrines of the means of grace.

We will now have a repetition of all that we have gone through to-day:

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what did we speak to-day in the religious instruction? Of the end and aim, or of the vocation of man.

2. How many aims are there? There are two kinds of aims, natural aims, and supernatural aims.

3. When the marksman erects a target so as to hit the centre with his weapon, what kind of aim is that? It is a natural aim.

4. When an athlete places a pole in position so as to be able to climb to the very top, what kind of aim is that? That is also a natural aim.

5. Of what aim is there question in the catechism? Of the end of man.

6. Is that a natural or a supernatural aim? It is a supernatural aim.

7. Why? Because it is not directed toward natural or created things but toward the supernatural, toward God.

8. What is understood by vocation? By vocation is understood the purpose for which a thing is intended.

9. Now what is man's vocation? To know God, love Him and serve Him, that he may one day enter into heaven.

10. As man is the noblest of all creatures, what about his vocation? It must be the noblest.

11. We will take one of man's subordinate creatures, the animal. Why does the animal exist? To serve man.

12. Is man also in this world merely to eat, sleep, work, and so on? No, man has a higher vocation, because he is the chief of all creatures.

13. Why is man the principal creature of God? Because he has an immortal soul to enjoy God forever.

14. The first then is the knowledge of God. How can we learn to know a person? By his personality, his disposition and character.

15. How do we know a person's disposition? By being frequently with him.

16. What do we learn about him thereby? We learn to know his good and bad qualities.

17. Can we learn to know God by His body or His visible Person? No, we cannot know God, etc.

18. Why not? Because God has no body.

19. What then can we learn to know about God? His Being, or in other words, His perfections.

20. What has God given to man whereby he may learn to know Him? God has given him the powers of the soul: reason and understanding.

21. But how far can we know God with our reason and our understanding? Only partially.

22. Which of God's perfections can we learn to know from the things He has created? His omnipotence, His goodness, His wisdom.

23. How then do we know God more fully than by our reason and understanding? By revelation.

24. How do we learn to know God by the powers of our mind and revelation? We learn to know Him as the most perfect spirit.

25. Why as the most perfect spirit? Because He possesses all good qualities in the highest degree.

26. What does God deserve, because He possesses all the good qualities in the highest degree? God deserves to be loved above all.

27. How should we love God? We should love God above all things.

28. To what does the knowledge of God lead us? It leads us to the love of God.

29. In what can the love of God consist? It can consist in words and in works.

30. Which is the right kind of love which God expects of us? Love in works.

31. What instruction does the catechism give us concerning the love of God? 1. That we should love God above all things as the supreme good. 2. We should give ourselves to Him entirely (to be His for time and eternity). 3. We should strive to please Him in all our actions. (To do everything that pleases Him and avoid everything that displeases Him.) 4. That we should wish to be united with Him eternally in heaven.

32. In what way does a Christian best prove his love for God? By observing His commandments.

33. Whence do you know this? From the words of Jesus Himself: "He who has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me."

34. What else can we call the keeping of the commandments? We can also say: To serve God.

35. Why must we serve God? Because He is our Lord.

36. How did He become our Lord? By creating us.

37. If God is the Lord, what are we human beings? We are His servants.

38. What does it mean to serve God? To serve God means to do His holy will.

39. Where is the will of God briefly contained? In the ten commandments.

40. From what motive should we serve God and keep His commandments? Because of our love for Him.

41. When are our motives imperfect? When we only keep the commandments of God for fear of hell or from selfishness, so that God may reward us with heaven.

42. The catechism asks: What will become of those who will not know, love, and serve God? God will cast them from Him.

43. For how long? For all eternity.

44. What proof of this can you give me from Holy Scripture? Holy Scripture says: "The unprofitable servant cast ye out into the exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

45. What is then most necessary in this life? In this life the most necessary thing is, that we should know, love, and serve God.

46. How can you prove this to me from Holy Scripture? Jesus said to Martha: "Thou art anxious about many things, Mary hath chosen the better part."

47. What was Martha anxious about? She was anxious about temporal things, to entertain Jesus well, etc.

48. Are all men as zealously striving to know God, to love and serve Him as they ought to? No, they are not all striving as zealously, etc.

49. After what do most people seek? They strive after temporal goods.

50. Why do they strive so much after temporal goods? So as to satisfy their sensual desires and inclinations, and to enjoy themselves.

51. What is man's longing for temporal goods called? It is called avarice.

52. What do you denote man's longing to satisfy his sensual desires and inclinations? This is called "love and pleasure."

53. Whom do men forget by their avarice and love of pleasure? They forget God, they turn away from Him.

54. How does this turning away from God show itself? They do not think of God, nor do they pray to Him, they do not care to hear the word of God, or to receive the Sacraments.

55. To what are their thoughts and aspirations directed? 1. To the acquisition of temporal goods, and 2. To the satisfying of their sensual desires and inclinations.

56. What did I tell you about sensual pleasures and enjoyments? That they did not give us true contentment.

57. What can alone make us truly and enduringly happy? The knowledge and love of God.

58. What does it mean to instruct? To instruct means: To teach.

59. What is understood by Christian instruction? Instruction in the teachings of Jesus.

60. What is that book called which contains Christian instruction? That book is called the catechism.

61. How is the instruction imparted in a catechism? By questions and answers.

62. Of what does the catechism treat? The catechism treats: 1. Of Faith. 2. Of the Commandmants. 3. Of the Means of Grace.

63. Where is the instruction in the teachings of Jesus imparted? In the church and in the school.

64. What then should those persons do who wish to be instructed in the teachings of Jesus? They should attend diligently Christian instruction.

65. What does it mean to attend diligently? Not to neglect any of the lessons on religion.

66. What does it mean to assist at them with attention? To listen to all that is said.

67. Why ought you to assist at religious instruction with diligence and attention? That we may know God rightly, learn to love and serve Him and thereby attain our highest aim.

68. Do all Christians attend religious instruction, particularly sermons and Christian doctrine as diligently and attentively as they ought to? No, very many persons neglect religious instruction.

I will tell you more about this subject; in particular, I will give you the reasons why many Christians neglect hearing sermons, and listening to the word of God. The reasons are twofold: Indifference and pride. The indifferent ones care not whether they are instructed in their holy religion or not, whether they know what is necessary for salvation or not. Whereas the proud consider themselves sufficiently instructed, and therefore are ashamed to assist at sermons and religious instruction.

Even if we are instructed in our holy religion it is necessary to hear the word of God, that we may not forget it. If we do not put fresh oil in the lamp it will go out. Besides, we shall always hear something new at every instruction that we never heard before.

Never be lukewarm, then, in listening to the word of God. As the bees collect wax and honey from the flowers and blossoms, so ought you to obtain from religious instruction zeal to do good, consolation in suffering, and courage in the combat against evil.

The hearing of the divine word will always remind you of your highest aim, and at the same time teach you how you may most surely attain this aim.

III.

On Faith.

I. IDEA AND OBJECT OF FAITH.

Dear Children:—In the last lesson on religion we heard that faith was the first requisite for salvation. The first chapter, therefore, treats of the doctrine of Faith. The doctrine of Faith is again divided into three sub-divisions and treats, firstly, of the *idea* and *object* of Faith, secondly, of the *necessity* of Faith, and thirdly, of the *qualities* of Faith. We come, therefore, to-day to the doctrine on the idea and object of Faith.

The idea of Faith tells us what Faith is, in what it consists. The object of Faith tells what we should believe.

The catechism asks: "What is Faith as possessed by a Catholic?" The answer says: "Faith is a virtue infused by God into our souls, by which we believe without doubting what God has revealed, and proposes by His Church to our belief.

Herein is contained then:

1. That Faith is a virtue granted to us by God, a present, and a gift of God's grace; also that a man and Christian has not Faith of himself.

2. That we not only must believe what God has revealed, but also what He has proposed to our belief through His Holy Catholic Church.

3. That we must believe all this undoubtingly, firmly, unconditionally, and not think that this or that which Faith teaches us could be otherwise.

The Catechism puts the question: "Why must we believe all that

God has revealed?" The answer is: "Because God is the eternal and infallible truth." God is the eternal truth, because He has ever, that is from eternity, revealed only the truth. God is the infallible truth because He can neither err nor lie, nor make a mistake. What means, "All that God has revealed?" "It means all that God has made known for our salvation by the Patriarchs and Prophets, and at last by His Son Jesus Christ and the Apostles." God, in His infinite love for mankind, wished by revelation to become as it were our Teacher. He wished to impart to us in the plainest and most complete manner all that which would render us happy for time and eternity. This communication of God to mankind for their salvation is called *Revelation.* Revelation is divided into the revelation of the Old Law and the revelation of the New Law.

By the Old Law we mean the time before the coming of Jesus Christ, and by the New Law the time after Jesus Christ. By the revelations of the Old Testament we mean those revelations which were given to mankind before the coming of Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament God revealed Himself to our first parents in Paradise, then to the righteous Noe, the obedient and peace-loving Abraham, then to Moses and the Prophets. But to fill up the measure of His love, God revealed Himself in the New Testament by His Beloved Son Jesus Christ and His messengers, the Apostles.

The Old Law lasted, as you know, from the creation of the world until the birth of Jesus Christ, and embraces a period of more than 4,000 years. Since the coming of Jesus Christ 1,900 years have passed. The question is, therefore: "Do we still know to-day what God has revealed?" Answer: "Yes, we know it yet." "How did what God has revealed come down to us?" "What God has revealed has come down to us partly written and partly by word of mouth; written in Holy Scripture or the Bible; verbally by tradition. We divide, therefore, the revelations of God into the written and the unwritten Word of God. The written Word of God is Holy Scripture, or the Bible; the unwritten Word of God is Tradition or verbal delivery." "What is the Holy Scripture?" "The Holy Scripture is a collection of books which were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and acknowledged by the Church as the Word of God."

The Holy Scripture contains, therefore, the revelation of the Divine Will, as it instructs us concerning the nature of God, of the vocation of man and his duties towards God, towards his neighbor, and towards himself. The Holy Scripture is not like any other

book, the mere work of man, but it was written by men who were inspired by the Holy Ghost.

It is called "Holy Scripture" because it contains only holy truths and holy doctrines, the Word of God itself, as it has always been acknowledged by the Church.

"Of what books does the Old Testament consist?"

1. Of Twenty-one Historical Books.

2. Of Seven Moral Books.

3. Of Seventeen Prophetical Books.

a. Historical books contain history. The historical books of the Old Testament tell us about—

1. The history of the creation of the world; of our first parents in Paradise and their fall.

2. The manner and way in which the first men worshipped God until the time when Jesus Christ was born.

3. What preparations and arrangements God had made for the worthy reception of the Redeemer.

4. Lastly, the Historical Books of the Old Testament give us a series of examples of virtue, thereby encouraging us to obey God, to be pure of heart, to be patient in suffering, etc.

b. Of seven Moral Books. The Moral Books serve for general instruction. To the Moral Books of the Old Testament belong in particular the Psalms, the Proverbs of King Solomon, the Book of Wisdom, the Canticle of Canticles, the Book of Job. All these Moral Books warn us in general of sin and encourage us to a pure life.

c. The seventeen Prophetical Books derive their name from the Prophets, because they contain the Prophecies. To prophesy means to foretell coming events. The Prophetical Books contain prophecies relating especially to the promised Redeemer, His birth and His kingdom. The Prophetical Books were written by the four great and the twelve lesser Prophets. The words "great" and "less" do not apply to the stature of the Prophets, but they imply that the great Prophets prophesied more and the lesser Prophets less. The four great Prophets are called Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel and Daniel. The lesser Prophets were Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias and Malachias.

Of what books does the New Testament consist?

1. Of the four Gospels according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John. Gospel means glad tidings. They were so

called because they proclaimed the glad tidings that we were to become reconciled with God again through Jesus Christ. The four Gospels were not written by Jesus Himself nor during His lifetime, but they were written first after His ascension, as the Christian religion was already widespread by the four Evangelists, who were divinely inspired. You may have noticed that in representations of the four evangelists each one has a particular emblem, which I will now explain to you.

The holy Evangelist Matthew has the emblem of a man, because he begins his Gospel with the genealogy and the birth of Jesus.

The Evangelist St. Mark has the picture of a lion, because he begins his Gospel in the desert.

The Evangelist St. Luke has the picture of a sacrificial calf, because he narrates in particular that which relates to the sacrifice of Jesus.

The holy Evangelist John, the picture of an eagle, because he lifts himself above the angels and everything created.

2. Of the Acts of the Apostles. They were written by St. Luke and relate the selection of the Apostle Matthias instead of Judas, the coming of the Holy Ghost, the founding of the first Christian community at Jerusalem, the persecution of the Apostles, the imprisonment of St. Peter, the beheading of St. James, the martyrdom of St. Stephen, the conversion of Saul, of the adventures and experiences of the twelve Apostles in general, after the Ascension of Jesus, the spreading of the teaching of Jesus amongst the heathen, and the journey of the Apostle St. Paul until his arrival in Rome, where he was beheaded.

3. Of the Apostolical Epistles, namely, fourteen Epistles of St. Paul, and seven by other Apostles. These contain excellent exhortations and instructions for the superior of a community as well as for the faithful of the Church of Christ.

4. Of the Apocalypse of St. John. This contains prophesies about the kingdom of Christ upon earth, of the victory of the teaching of Jesus over both His arch enemies, namely, Judaism, and heathendom; all this is told by different apparitions and visions. It speaks at length of the resurrection of the dead, of the glorious reward of the blessed in heaven, and the awful misery of the reprobate.

Now some people might doubt whether the Holy Scripture is genuine, that is to say whether it had come down to us unfalsified,

whether anything had been omitted, or added to it, if anything in it had been changed. Answer: Yes, the Holy Scripture has come down to us unfalsified, for the Church used every imaginable care to prevent the very least falsification, and the Holy Ghost Himself, as the Church's Helper, kept guard over it so that no real falsification of the Holy Scripture could take place in its translation from one language to another, or in being copied. If a few events are related in a different way, that is to say, in other words, this slight deviation changes *nothing* of the contents of the facts and events therein related.

The Catechism asks further: "Is it enough to believe only those doctrines which are contained in the Holy Scripture?" "No, we must also believe Tradition, *i.e.,* those revealed truths which the Apostles preached, but did not commit to writing. St. Paul, therefore, exhorts the first Christians by saying: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and *hold the traditions* which you have learned, whether by word or by our Epistle." (II. Thess. ii. 14.)

Why did not the Apostles write all that Jesus taught? Because Christ did not commission them to *write* but to *preach* His doctrine. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," but not, Write it all down.

The unwritten Word of God is called Tradition because it has been handed down in the Catholic Church from the time of the Apostles to the present day. But why must we believe Tradition, as well as what is contained in the Holy Scripture? Because Catholic Tradition was revealed by God, as well as that which is contained in the Holy Scripture, and only differs from it inasmuch as it is not written down in the Bible.

The holy Evangelists only wrote, therefore, to give a brief sketch of the life, works and teachings of Jesus.

Tradition is even necessary, because it can and does determine how a passage of Holy Scripture may be interpreted, when there exists a doubt about it, *i.e.,* about its interpretation. In this sense all the Councils of the Church express themselves, in particular, the fourth Council of the Church at Constantinople, in the year 869, where it expressly teaches: "That we must accept with reverence and observe the laws and institutions of the Apostles and of the Catholic Church, whether they be written down or preserved by Tradition."

That we may venerate Tradition, it is necessary to know through whom Tradition has been handed down to us, namely, the Holy

Fathers of the Church. It was these men who by the sanctity of their lives as well as by their eminent gift of teaching distinguished themselves and have always been acknowledged by the Church as authentic witnesses of Tradition.

"What, then, must the Catholic Christian in general believe?" "He must believe all that God has revealed and the Catholic Church proposes to his belief, whether it be contained in the Holy Scripture or not."

The proof of this, that we must believe the teaching of the Catholic Church, as to what God has revealed, we take from the Holy Scripture. Jesus said to His Apostles: "He that heareth you, heareth me." He then who hears the Church, hears Jesus Christ, and whoever hears Jesus Christ hears God.

"Why is it necessary that the Catholic Church should propose the revealed truths to our belief?" "Because it is only from the Catholic Church, as to what God has revealed, we take from the Holy The Catholic Church takes the place of Jesus Christ upon earth. For He said expressly to His Apostles: "As the Father hath sent Me, so do I send you." Wherefore He granted them the assistance of the Holy Ghost.

"How can we infallibly know from the Catholic Church alone what God has revealed?"

1. "Because it is from the Catholic Church only that we have the Scripture and Tradition which contain the Divine Revelations. The chiefs of the Catholic Church as the lawful successors of the Apostles collected the Holy Scripture most carefully with the assistance of the Holy Ghost and guarded them conscientiously that not one of these writings should become falsified.

2. "Because it is through the Catholic Church alone that we infallibly know the true meaning of the Scripture and Tradition.

The Holy Scripture does not explain itself, it must be explained by some one. Therefore, Jesus said to His Apostles: "Go ye and *teach.*" Many passages of Holy Scripture can be interpreted differently. But the living teacher can explain the true and right meaning.

May no one, then, presume to explain the Scripture and Tradition contrary to the interpretation of the Catholic Church?

No, for this would be as if he understood the Scripture and Tradition better than the Holy Ghost, Who inspires the Church with the true meaning of it. The Holy Ghost, Who inspired the

Apostles when they wrote the Holy Scripture is to-day still the Helper of the Catholic Church, so that she may explain the right meaning of the Holy Scripture. If each one were to interpret the Holy Scripture as he liked, by degrees its truth would be lost and Faith would no longer have a firm foundation. It is therefore necessary that the teaching office of the Catholic Church should give us the right meaning of the Holy Scripture. We will now have a repetition of what has been learned to-day.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day in the religious instruction? Of the idea and object of Faith.

2. What does the idea of faith teach us? It teaches us what faith is.

3. What is meant by the object of faith? It means what the Catholic should believe.

4. What is faith? It is a virtue infused by God into the soul whereby, etc.

5. What is the consequence of this? That the Christian does not possess the virtue of faith of himself, it is a free gift of God.

6. In what does this virtue granted by God consist? It consists in this that we believe without doubting whatever God has revealed, and the Catholic Church proposes to our belief.

7. What must we believe as Catholics? Everything that God has revealed.

8. And where do we find the revelations of God? In the teachings of the Catholic Church.

9. How must we believe all this? We must believe it without doubting.

10. Why must we believe without doubting whatever God has revealed? Because God is the eternal and infallible truth.

11. What means: God is truth? It means: God cannot lie.

12. Why is God the eternal truth? Because from all eternity God has revealed nothing but truth.

13. Why is God the infallible truth? Because God cannot err, nor make a mistake.

14. What is meant by everything that God has revealed? Everything that God has announced to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and through His Son Jesus and His Apostles, for our salvation.

15. Of what was God mindful from all eternity? Of the salvation of mankind.

16. What did God do for the salvation of man? He revealed Himself to man.

17. What did He reveal to him? His holy will.

18. Why did God reveal His will to man? That he might obey it.

19. To whom did God first reveal Himself? To our first parents in Paradise.

20. What did He say to them? He said: "Eat of all the trees in the garden; but of this tree in the middle of the garden you shall not eat."

21. Did our first parents do the will of God? No, they did not do it.

22. What is voluntary transgression of the divine will called? It is called: *sin.*

23. What did God make known to man after he had sinned? He made known to him His displeasure.

24. How did He make it known to him? By punishing him.

25. Later on through whom did God reveal Himself to men? Through the Patriarchs.

26. What does Patriarch means? Patriarch means "ancestor."

27. Who were the Patriarchs? The Patriarchs were Noe, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

28. To whom did God reveal Himself after the Patriarchs? To the Prophets.

29. Who were the Prophets? The Prophets were men who at the inspiration of God foretold future events.

30. To whom did God reveal Himself more fully? To Moses.

31. Who was Moses? He was the man who led the Israelites out of Egypt.

32. What did God give to Moses, so as to reveal Himself to the Israelites? He gave him the ten commandments.

33. Through whom did God reveal Himself most distinctly and perfectly? Through His only Begotten Son Jesus Christ.

34. What began with the birth of Jesus? The New Law.

35. And what ended with the birth of Jesus? The Old Law.

36. What is meant by the Old Law? The time before Jesus.

37. What period of time does the Old Law embrace? A period of about 4,000 years.

38. What is meant by New Law? The time after Jesus Christ.

39. What period of time does the New Law embrace up to the present? About 1,900 years.

40. Do we know at the present day what God revealed thousands of years ago? Yes, we know it now.

41. How did what God has revealed come down to us? What God has revealed has come down to us partly written, and partly by word of mouth, written in the Holy Scripture, and verbally by tradition.

42. What else is the Holy Scripture called? It is called the Bible.

43. What else? The written Word of God.

44. What are those revelations called which were not written down? They are called Tradition.

45. What else? The unwritten word of God.

46. What is the Holy Scripture? The Holy Scripture is a collection of books which were written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and are acknowledged by the Church as the Word of God.

47. Why are these Books called the Holy Scripture? Because they contain only holy teachings and holy truths.

48. By whose inspiration were the Sacred Books written? By the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

49. How is the Holy Scripture divided? The Holy Scripture is divided into the Old and New Law, or the Old and New Testament.

50. What does the Old Testament contain? It contains those revelations which were delivered to man before the coming of Jesus Christ.

51. What does the Holy Scripture contain in the New Testament? It contains those revelations which were delivered to man after the coming of Jesus.

52. Of what Books does the Old Testament consist? 1. Of 21 Historical Books. 2. Of 7 Moral Books. 3. Of 17 Prophetical Books.

53. What do the Historical Books contain generally? They contain history.

54. Did you observe what the Historical Books of the Old Testament relate? They relate the creation of the world, the story of our first parents in Paradise, and their fall.

55. What else? The manner and way in which the first men and their descendants worshipped God until the time when Jesus Christ was born.

56. What do the Historical Books contain in regard to the Redeemer? The arrangements that God had ordered for the reception of the Redeemer.

57. What do the Historical Books of the Old Testament put before us? A succession of virtuous examples.

58. Mention some of them. Of Noe and Abraham, of Job and Tobias, etc.

59. Why are these examples of virtue put before us? For our imitation.

60. What Books follow the Historical Books? The seven Moral Books.

61. Of what use are Moral Books in general? They serve to instruct us.

62. What are the principal contents of the seven Moral Books? Warnings against sin, and encouragements to a pure moral life.

63. Can you name some of these Moral Books? The Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, the Book of Wisdom, the Canticle of Canticles.

64. What Books follow the Moral Books? The Prophetical Books.

65. What do the Prophetical Books contain? They contain prophecies.

66. What does it mean to prophesy? To prophesy means to foretell future events.

67. What were those men called who foretold coming events? They were called Prophets.

68. How could the Prophets foretell future events when God alone is omniscient? God revealed the future to them.

69. How are the Prophets divided? Into the great and lesser Prophets.

70. What is meant by great Prophets? Those Prophets who prophesied the most.

71. Name the four great Prophets? Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel and Daniel.

72. What means lesser Prophets? Those Prophets who foretold less.

73. Name some of the lesser Prophets? Jonas, Zacharias, Malachias, etc.

74. What did the Prophets prophesy in particular? The coming of the promised Redeemer, His birth, and His Kingdom.

75. Of what Books does the New Testament consist? 1. Of the four Gospels. 2. Of the Acts of the Apostles by St. Luke. 3. Of the Apostolical Epistles. 4. Of the Apocalypse.

76. The four Gospels then stand at the head. By whom were the four Gospels written? By St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John.

77. What are these writers called on this account? The four Evangelists.

78. What does Gospel mean? Gospel means glad tidings.

79. Why are these Books called Gospels? Because they announce to us glad tidings.

80. What glad tidings? That through Jesus Christ we should become reconciled with God.

81. At what time were the four Gospels written? After the Ascension of Jesus, when the Christian religion was spreading rapidly.

82. What in particular did I teach you in to-day's instruction about the four Evangelists? That each of them had an emblem.

83. What else? The meaning of these emblems.

84. What emblem is given to St. Matthew? The emblem of a man.

85. Why? Because St. Matthew begins his Gospel with the genealogy and birth of Jesus Christ.

86. What emblem is given to St. Mark? The emblem of a lion.

87. For what reason? Because he begins his Gospel in the desert.

88. What emblem is given to St. Luke? The emblem of a sacrificial calf.

89. Why? Because he relates particularly what concerns the sacrifice of Jesus.

90. What emblem is given to St. John? The emblem of an eagle.

91. Why? Because in his Gospel he lifts himself above the angels and all created things.

92. What Book follows the four Gospels? The Acts of the Apostles.

93. Who was the author of the Acts of the Apostles? The Evangelist St. Luke.

94. What is the general contents of this Book? The life of the Apostles after the Ascension of Jesus.

95. What Books follow the Acts of the Apostles? The Apostolical Epistles.

96. By whom were these Epistles written? St. Paul wrote fourteen of them, and seven were written by other Apostles.

97. What do the Epistles particularly contain? They contain exhortations and instructions for the first Christian communities and their superiors.

98. What Book forms the end of the Holy Scripture of the New Testament? The Apocalypse or Revelation of St. John.

99. Which of you can tell me the principal contents of this Book? It contains prophecies about the kingdom of Christ upon earth, of the victory of the Christian Church over Judaism and paganism, of the reward of the good, and of the awful fate of the damned.

100. In what way does this Book differ from the other Books of the New Testament? By being written in wonderful visions and apparitions.

101. Why is this Book called the secret revelation? Because its contents are very difficult to understand.

102. After we have learned to know the different Books of the Old and New Testament the question is: Can we then be convinced that the Holy Scripture has come down to us unfalsified, *i.e.*, unchanged? Yes, we can be convinced of this.

103. Why? Because the Catholic Church has taken every imaginable precaution to that end.

104. But there are for instance several events in Holy Scripture related with different words? The facts remain always substantially the same.

105. Has everything been written down that Jesus and the Apostles taught? No, all has not been written down.

106. How did those teachings and revelations which were not written come down to us? By Tradition or word of mouth.

107. Must we believe Tradition as undoubtingly as we do the Holy Scripture? Yes, we must believe Tradition as firmly as we believe the Holy Scripture.

108. For what reason? Because Tradition contains the revealed truths as well as the Holy Scripture does.

109. Can you prove this to me by Holy Scripture? Yes; St. Paul, the Apostle, writes: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by *word,* or by our Epistle."

110. Why did not the Apostles write down everything that Jesus taught? Because they did not receive any commission from Jesus to do so.

111. What commission did Jesus give to His Apostles when He sent them forth into the world? He said: "Go ye and *teach* all nations."

112. What did Jesus not say? Go and write down all that I have taught you.

113. Is Tradition necessary? Yes; it is necessary.

114. Why is it necessary? To decide difficulties, the interpretation of a passage of the Holy Scripture.

115. What do the Councils of the Church teach concerning Tradition? They teach that we must accept it with reverence, and observe what it hands down to us.

116. Which Council of the Church declared this? The Council of Constantinople.

117. Through whom did Tradition come down to us? Through the Fathers of the Church.

118. What did I tell you about the Fathers of the Church? That they were eminent men.

119. In what way were they eminent? By the sanctity of their lives.

120. By what else? By their eminent gift of teaching.

121. How consequently have the Holy Fathers always been acknowledged by the Church? As the legitimate witnesses of Tradition.

122. Can you name some of the Fathers? St. Augustine, St. Jerome, etc.

123. What then must a Christian principally believe? Everything that God has revealed and the Catholic Church proposes to his belief, whether the same is found in the Holy Scripture or not.

124. But why is it necessary that the Catholic Church should propose the revealed truths to us? Because it is only through the Catholic Church that we can infallibly know what God has revealed.

125. How can we only know infallibly by the Catholic Church what God has revealed? Because we can only have the Holy Scripture and Tradition from the Catholic Church and through her alone can we learn the meaning of the Holy Scripture and Tradition.

126. Why is it necessary that the meaning of the Holy Scripture and Tradition should be interpreted and explained for us? Because the Holy Scripture does not explain itself.

127. And why else? Because the Holy Scripture can be interpreted and explained in different ways.

128. Who explains the right meaning of the Holy Scripture to us? The teaching office of the Church.

129. May any one interpret the Scripture and Tradition contrary to the Church's meaning? No; for that would be pretending to understand the Scripture and Tradition better than the Holy Ghost, Who inspires the Church with the right meaning of the same.

130. Who teaches the Church the right meaning of the Holy Scripture and Tradition? The Holy Ghost.

131. What would happen if each one interpreted the Scripture according to his liking? The trtuh would gradually be lost.

132. And what would happen to Christian Faith? It would have no longer a firm foundation.

133. What then is necessary? That the Catholic Church should explain for us the meaning of the Holy Scripture and Tradition.

134. What practical application does the Catechism add to this? It says: "Hold fast to the teaching of the Catholic Church all your life, for by believing what the Church teaches, you believe the word of God."

Yes, children, impress these words deeply upon your minds. The Church teaches only what is good, she points out the way to heaven, she leads us to eternal happiness. The teaching of the Church is not man's word, it is God's. And the word of God is the foundation upon which alone we can erect the edifice of our eternal salvation. The Word of God is the star which illumines the path to our heavenly country. The word of God is the anchor, with which we must make fast the ship of our earthly life, that it may not be wrecked in the combat with sin and passions. The word of God is the invisible hand by which God will conduct us into the kingdom of everlasting peace. He who holds fast all his life to the teaching of the Church, will not go astray, but will find the way to eternal salvation.

IV.

On the Necessity of Faith.

Dear Children:—In the last lesson on religion we spoke of the idea and object of faith; we come to-day to the second paragraph of the Catechism which treats of the *Necessity of Faith.*

Now in general those things are necessary for man which he absolutely must have, without which he could not possibly exist. For instance, air is absolutely indispensable to life. Without air man would suffocate.

Furthermore, food is necessary for man's existence. Without food he would starve.

Further examples may be found in the existence of other created things.

That a tree may grow and thrive, good soil, light, sun, air and moisture are indispensably necessary. Without these it would fade and wither away.

The catechism now speaks of the necessity of Faith for salvation, and puts the question: "Is Faith necessary for salvation?"

The answer is: Faith is indispensably necessary for salvation. Holy Scripture says: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Faith is, as we have already heard, the foundation stone upon which our holy religion is built; it is, as St. Augustine says, the *soul of Christian virtue.* It is the *ladder* by which, as it were, we climb up to salvation, the *key* with which we can open heaven. Without faith we can do nothing to merit eternal life. Without faith it is impossible to please God. The proof of this we draw from Holy Scripture. The Apostle St. John says: "He who believeth not is already judged." That means in other words: "Those who do not believe bear already within them the sentence of condemnation."

And the Evangelist St. Mark says: "He who believeth not will be condemned." Those therefore who do not believe will be shut out from communion with God, from the Vision of God, and eternal bliss; their lot will be eternal damnation.

It is decidedly not a matter of indifference as to *which* Faith we have; for it is not every faith that gives salvation; but only the *true* faith, which Christ the Lord has taught us, will save us. We draw the proofs of this also from Holy Scripture. Christ says: "He that believeth in the Son, hath life everlasting; but he that believeth not in the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Jesus therefore promises eternal life to those who believe in Him, and says of those who do not believe in Him that the wrath of God will remain upon them.

In another part of Holy Scripture Christ says: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Christ here calls Himself the Way, because it is only through Him, and through belief in Him, that we can attain to our supreme aim, which is heaven.

Christ calls Himself the *Truth,* because His teaching is the only divine, and the only true teaching. Jesus calls Himself the *Life,* because we can obtain eternal life only through His teaching.

In another place Christ says: "No one cometh to the Father but through me;" that is to say, by faith in Jesus Christ and by obeying His teaching.

The true Faith which Christ the Lord and His Apostles taught, is opposed to false faith, to heresy.

Whatever is contrary to truth is false. Those doctrines there-

fore are false which not only Jesus and His apostles did not teach, but which are opposed to the doctrines of Jesus and proceed from men who have fallen away from His doctrines. But as a bough which is broken off no longer belongs to its tree, so excepting the doctrine taught by Jesus there is none which can assert itself to be His true doctrine. False doctrines do not proceed from Jesus and His Apostles, but from men who have fallen away from the true Faith.

"But why does that faith alone save us which Christ the Lord has taught?"

"Because without this Faith we can have no part in Christ; without Christ there is no hope of salvation."

As no one can reach the goal by the wrong path, so is it impossible to obtain salvation by any other but the right path; that is, by the true faith taught by Christ.

Here, too, Holy Scripture affords us the proof: St. John says: "There is no other name given to man under heaven, whereby he may be saved."

Jesus says: "He who is not with me, is against me. He who gathereth not with me, scattereth." And the Apostle St. Peter spoke: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

It would therefore be a sin to maintain that every faith could save us; for then God need not have given any revelation, and our forefathers might have remained heathens. God would not have needed to send His only Begotten Son into the world, if it mattered so little which faith we had. There are various remedies at the physician's command which he can use to cure disease. But it is not immaterial *which* remedy he employs; he must know by his science which is the *right* one, which is the *best*. There are many stars in the firmament, but only *one* sun is the king, to illumine the day. In the same way, there is only one true Faith, and this true Faith is possessed by the Catholic Church alone. She has always preserved it without error, as a heavenly treasure confided to her. There are certainly besides the Catholic Church numerous religious bodies, but they have received their doctrine, not from Jesus and the Apostles, but from men who had fallen away from Christ and from the true Faith.

In the fourth century Arius separated himself from the Catholic Church by denying the Divinity of Jesus. His followers are called Arians. In the fifth century Nestorius left the Catholic Church

because he denied that Mary was the Mother of God. His followers were called Nestorians. Thus in the fifth century Pelagius apostatized from the Catholic Church by asserting that man is born without sin, that he could of his own strength (without Divine grace) keep the commandments, and that Baptism was not necessary for infants. His followers were called Pelagians. Thus in the sixteenth century did Luther fall away from the Catholic Church, by rejecting the doctrine of Indulgences, of Purgatory, and of the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and teaching that faith alone was necessary for salvation. His followers are called Lutherans.

When a false doctrine finds adherents, then sects arise, that is, separated parts or cuttings.

The holy doctor of the Church, St. Augustine, says of the sects: "All sects fell away from the Catholic Church like useless twigs which fall off the vine."

Everyone therefore who is a member of the Catholic Church cannot thank God enough for this great grace of being born in the Catholic Church.

Through the Catholic Church we are members of that Body, of which Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour and Redeemer, is Himself the Head. We are thereby members of a Church which is conducted and ruled by the Holy Ghost Himself.

As members of the Catholic Church we have the right at all times to satisfy our longings at the seven Divine streams of grace, the holy Sacraments.

Through the Catholic Church we participate in the blessings and graces of that Sacrifice which is renewed daily upon our altars in an unbloody manner,—the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

Through the Catholic Church we stand as members of the Church militant, in communication with the Church triumphant, the Saints in heaven, who constantly pray for us at the throne of God.

We are thereby children of a loving Mother, who will never forsake us during our whole life, who welcomes us at our birth through holy Baptism, and accompanies us to the grave; who comforts us in crosses and sufferings and even in the greatest conflicts; who does not abandon us in the hour of death, when she bestows on us the last Sacraments and Holy Viaticum. Is it not a great grace to be a member of the Catholic Church?

Melanchthon himself gives us a striking example of this, although he had fallen away from the Catholic Church.

When his mother asked him upon his dying bed whether she should embrace the new faith, or remain in the old, he answered her: That although the new doctrine was good to live in, still the old faith was best to die in.

An ancient church hymn says:

"It is good to live a Catholic, it is good to die a Catholic."

The moral lesson to be drawn from this is: Rejoice and thank God frequently that you are a child of the Church, for as St. Augustine says, there is no greater treasure, and no greater riches than the Catholic Faith, because it alone can save us.

The Catholic Faith resembles a precious treasure, a priceless pearl. He who possesses a precious treasure, a priceless pearl, guards it with anxious solicitude that this treasure may not be stolen from him. We should rejoice that we are children of the Catholic Church. But we should not be so in *name* only, but in the fullest sense of the word.

How should we behave towards those who are not of our Faith? We should be tolerant towards them.

We shall now repeat what we have to-day learnt.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the necessity of faith.
2. In general, when is anything said to be necessary? In general that is said to be necessary which man indispensably requires, without which he cannot exist.
3. What, for instance, is indispensably necessary to the life of man? For the life of man, air and food are absolutely necessary.
4. Why are these things absolutely necessary for him? Because without them he could not live.
5. What other example did I use? The example of a tree.
6. That a plant or tree should grow and thrive, what is absolutely necessary for it? Good soil, light, air, sun, and moisture.
7. Why is all this necessary for it? Because otherwise it would fade and wither.
8. The catechism speaks thus of the necessity of Faith for salvation, and puts the question: "Is faith necessary for salvation?" Yes, Faith is indispensably necessary for salvation.
9. Say this in other words. Without Faith it is impossible for anyone to be saved.
10. To what have I compared Faith therefore? To a *ladder*, with which we can climb up to heaven.
11. To what else? To a key with which we can open heaven.
12. Who was called a holy doctor of the Church? St. Augustine.

13. What does the holy doctor of the church, St. Augustine, call the Faith? He calls it the soul of Christian virtue.

14. For what reason? Because all the Christian virtues spring from Faith.

15. What does Holy Scripture say about the necessity of Faith? It says: "Without Faith it is impossible to please God.

16. In what way can you give me proofs of the necessity of Faith? By many passages from the Holy Scriptures.

17. What, for instance, does St. John say about Faith? St. John says: "Whosoever believeth not is already judged."

18. What does that mean? That he already bears the sentence of damnation within him.

19. What does St. Mark say about Faith? St. Mark says: "He who believeth not shall be condemned."

20. What, then, is the lot of the unbelieving? They will be eternally damned.

21. Can we attain eternal happiness by any faith? No, we cannot attain eternal happiness through any faith.

22. Which Faith must we have to attain to everlasting bliss? The true Faith.

23. Which is the true Faith? The true Faith is that taught us by Christ the Lord.

24. How can you prove this to me? By many passages from Holy Scripture.

25. Mention one of them. Christ says: "He that believeth in the Son, hath life everlasting; but he that believeth not in the Son, will not see life, but the wrath of God striketh him.

26. What do they obtain who believe in the Son of God? They obtain life eternal.

27. But what do those persons draw down upon themselves who do not believe in the Son of God? They draw down upon themselves the wrath of God.

28. What does that mean: the wrath of God? Eternal damnation.

29. Give me another appropriate verse of Scripture. Christ says; "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

30. Why does Christ call Himself the way? Because it is only through Him that we can attain our supreme end, which is heaven.

31. Why does Christ call Himself the truth? Because His doctrine alone is the true one.

32. Why does Christ call Himself the life? Because through Him alone can we obtain life eternal.

33. Give me another passage from Holy Scripture. "No one comes to the Father, but through Me."

34. How should we understand these words of Jesus? No one can enter into heaven except through the Faith in Jesus Christ.

35. What is a doctrine which is contrary to the true doctrine of Jesus? It is false.

36. What do we generally signify by the word "false"? Everything which is contrary to truth.

37. What, then, is a false doctrine? A false doctrine is one that was not taught by Jesus and His Apostles and differs from their teaching.

38. From whom do false doctrines proceed? From men who have fallen away from the Catholic Church.

39. Can a false doctrine lead to salvation? No, a false doctrine cannot lead to salvation.

40. Which is the only saving doctrine? The Catholic doctrine.

41. From whom does the Catholic doctrine come? From Jesus and His Apostles.

42. Why is it only the Faith taught by Christ the Lord that can save us? Because without his faith we can have no part in Christ, without Christ we cannot hope to be saved.

43. How can you prove this to me? By Holy Scripture.

44. Mention the particular verse. St. John says: "There is no other name under Heaven given to man, whereby we may be saved."

45. What is the meaning of these words? We cannot enter into heaven except through Jesus Christ.

46. What are the words of Jesus Himself? Jesus says: "He who is not with me is against me. Whosoever gathereth not with me, scattereth."

47. What did St. Peter say to Jesus? "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

48. What is the meaning of these two passages of Scripture? That only by Faith in Jesus Christ can we be saved.

49. If, then, the Faith taught by Jesus Christ is the only one which leads to salvation, what would it be if anyone were to affirm that every faith leads to salvation? It would be a sin.

50. What reason can you give me for this? Because then God would not have needed to reveal Himself.

51. What comparison did I make use of? A comparison with a physician.

52. What is the calling of a physician? He cures the sick.

53. What means has a physician for the healing of the sick? He has numerous remedies at hand.

54. Does every remedy restore health? No, every remedy does not restore health.

55. Which remedy does the physician apply? He applies the one which he considers the best.

56. What do I wish you to understand by the "best remedy"? The doctrine of Jesus.

57. Which Church has the true Faith taught by Christ? The Catholic church alone has the true Faith taught by Christ.

58. Why has the Catholic Church alone the true Faith taught by Christ? Because the Catholic Church alone has received this Faith as a heavenly treasure confided to her by Christ Himself through His Apostles, and has always preserved it unchanged.

59. What is the Catholic Faith called here? It is called a heavenly treasure.

60. Who possesses this heavenly treasure? The Catholic Church.

61. From whom did she receive it? Though Jesus Christ Himself.

62. Through whom did she receive it? Through the Apostles.

63. How has the Catholic Church preserved this heavenly treasure? she has preserved it unchanged.

64. What does unchanged mean? That nothing has been added or taken away from it.

65. The Catholic doctrine then is just as Christ and the Apostles taught it. When anyone teaches doctrine different from that of the Catholic Church, what kind of doctrine is it? It is false doctrine.

66. What else can we call a false doctrine? We can call it *heresy.*

67. What do we call a person who teaches differently from the Catholic Church? We call him a *heretic.*

68. Can you name some of the heretics of whom we have spoken to-day? Arius, Nestorius, Pelagius, and Luther.

69. What false doctrine did Arius teach? He denied the divinity of Jesus.

70. What false doctrine did Nestorius introduce? He denied that Mary was the mother of God.

71. What heresy did Pelagius teach? He affirmed that man was born without sin.

72. What else? That man could keep the commandments of his own strength.

73. What would be the result of this? That man would not need the Grace of God.

74. What else did he teach? That the Baptism of infants was unnecessary.

75. What heresies did Luther promulgate? He rejected the doctrine of Indulgences, of Purgatory, and of the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

76. What else? He taught that Faith alone would save us.

77. Why then are the doctrines of these men heresies? Because these doctrines contradict the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles.

78. What arises when false doctrines find followers? There arise *Sects.*

79. What does St. Augustine say of these Sects? St. Augustine says: "All Sects fell away from the Catholic Church like useless twigs which fall off the vine."

80. What, therefore, do we owe to God for making us members of the Catholic Church? We owe the greatest gratitude to God.

81. In what graces do we share by being members of the Catholic Church? We are thereby members of that Body of which Christ is the head.

82. What are our privileges as members of the Catholic Church? We can at all times satisfy our longing for Divine grace.

83. By what do we satisfy this longing? By receiving the sacraments.

84. Who becomes our mother by the Catholic Faith? The Catholic Church.

85. What kind of mother is the Catholic Church? A kind and loving mother.

86. Why is she a kind and loving mother? Because she never forsakes us from the cradle to the grave.

87. What do we receive from the Church at our birth? Holy Baptism.

88. And what does she give us at our death? The last Sacraments.

89. What does she do with our graves? She blesses our last resting-place.

90. And what does she do after our death? She prays for the repose of our souls.

91. Which heretic acknowledged the great graces of the Catholic Faith? Melanchthon.

92. What did I tell you about this man? That as his mother asked him upon his dying bed whether she should embrace the new doctrine, or remain in the old Catholic Faith, he answered her that: It was good to *live* in the new doctrine, but better to die in the old.

93. What does an ancient Church hymn say? "It is good to live a Catholic, it is good to die a Catholic.

94. What is the moral application with which the catechism concludes? Rejoice and thank God frequently that you are a member of the Catholic Church, for, as St. Augustine says: there is no greater treasure than the Catholic Faith, because by this only can we be saved."

95. With what is the Catholic Church here compared? With the greatest treasure.

96. For what reason? Because in the Catholic Church alone is salvation.

97. If anyone possesses a precious treasure how does he feel about it? He feels very happy.

98. And why is he anxious about it? For fear anyone should take this treasure away from him.

99. Now, if the Catholic Faith is such a precious treasure, of what should we be very careful? That we are not deprived of this treasure.

100. How then can we lose the Catholic Faith? By frequenting the company of irreligious persons.

101. But is it not sufficient to have the Catholic Faith? No, it is not sufficient.

102. What else should we do? We should live according to our Faith.

103. How should we behave towards those who are not of our Faith? We should be tolerant towards them.

104. In what does true Christianity consist? In not only believing what Jesus has taught, but in also leading a Christian life like Christ.

105. What do we call those persons, who, although they have the Faith, do not live up to it? We call them Catholics in name only.

Teacher: After having spoken to-day of the *necessity* of Faith, we have to learn the *qualities* of Faith, and this will be the subject of our next instruction.

V.

On the Qualities of Faith.

Dear Children:—Our instruction to-day will be on the *qualities of Faith.* Now, our Faith should be: 1, general; 2, firm; 3, lively; and 4, steadfast. Our Faith then should be: 1, general: General is that which extends to everything. Our Faith then is general when we not only believe *some things,* but *everything* which Christ has taught and the Catholic Church proposes for our belief.

I shall give you a few examples. A person believes in God the Father, and in God the Son, but not in the Holy Ghost. His Faith is not *general.* Another one believes in heaven and hell, but not in a place of purification. His Faith is not *general.* Or someone doubts the institution by Christ of one or other of the Sacraments. His Faith is not general.

Thomas doubted the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead. His faith was not general. But as a chain loses its connection, if even one link is missing, and as a bell loses its tone if there is a single crack in it, so our Faith is not general if we only doubt one single article of Faith. Our Faith must be a definite, complete, whole.

Our Faith must, 2, be firm. Anything is firm which we can undo or separate only by using force. Thus does the oak stand firm in the ground. The most violent storm is unable to uproot it. The rock also stands firm in the sea. The waves and breakers dash upon it, as if they wanted to crumble it to pieces, but it does not move. Our Faith is firm when we believe without doubting in the least. True faith doubts not. It believes that which it cannot see, and which it cannot fully comprehend and grasp with its mind. A firm faith not only believes the revelations which are contained in the Holy Scripture, but those also which have been handed down to us by tradition. Such was the firm faith of Noe. Without objection he built the Ark, and feared not that the flood would overwhelm it. And so it was with Abraham. He was ready to sacrifice his only son, and he did not doubt the promise that God would make him the head of a great people. The woman who suffered from an issue of blood firmly believed that Jesus could cure her. She had not the slightest doubt about it; and therefore Jesus said to her: "Thy faith hath made thee whole. Go in peace." The centurion of Capharnaum likewise had a firm faith. He did not doubt that Christ could cure his servant, even without seeing him or laying His hands upon him. Therefore Jesus said: "Verily, I have not found so great (firm) faith in Israel." Still a doubt which arises within us, against our wills as a temptation, is not a sin, if we immediately oppose it with a determined will to believe everything which God has revealed and that the Catholic Church proposes to our belief. We are also obliged to avoid persons, places and occasions which might arouse in us doubt of our Faith.

Our faith should be, 3, *lively*. Lively is contrary to lifeless, dead. A man, for instance, in whom dwells a soul, is living; a man without a soul is dead. Our Faith is living when we live according to it; that is to say, do good and avoid evil, as the faith prescribes. On the contrary our faith is dead, when it does not show itself in good works. The Apostle St. James says: "As a body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."

If, for instance, a person believes that God is our Father, he must

have a great reverence for God and render Him a childlike obedience, otherwise his faith is dead.

If a person believes that God is omnipresent, omniscient and just, he must be afraid to sin and offend God, otherwise his faith is dead.

If a person believes that the authority of God is absolute, he must then obey it, or his faith is dead. If we believe that the Church is a house wherein God dwells, our behavior therein must be edifying, otherwise our faith is dead. If we believe that transitory goods are valueless in the sight of God, and yet we cannot detach our hearts from them, our faith is dead. A living faith resembles a fruitful tree; it has leaves, blossoms, and fruit. But a dead faith resembles a withered tree; it has neither leaves, nor blossoms, nor fruit.

For this reason Holy Scripture relates to us the parable of the unfruitful tree upon which for many years the Lord looked for fruit, but never found any. At last He ordered the barren tree to be cut down and burnt.

Our faith should also be, 4, *steadfast.*

Those persons are steadfast who cannot be made to change their views and principles, and whose will cannot be bent. That man is steadfast in the faith who neither by promises, threats, or even martyrdom itself is induced to fall away from his faith. We have an example of this in the holy Martyrs. No pain, torture, or suffering could be imagined that these Martyrs did not have to undergo to force them to deny their Faith. But they remained steadfast; with cheerful courage they endured everything, and if, instead of *once,* they could have died *ten* times for Christ, they would have done so.

St. Lawrence was roasted on a gridiron, but he did not apostatize. In the year 1590, in Japan, 20,000 Christians were crucified, or burnt, but they were all steadfast in the Faith, they all met death courageously. He who is not steadfast in the faith resembles a *reed,* which is driven by the wind hither and thither. The steadfast faith, however, is like the rock in the sea which is immovable in the most violent storm.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. How ought our faith to be? It should be: 1, general; 2, firm; 3, living; 4, steadfast.

2. Which is the first quality which our faith should have? It should be general.

3. What is meant by general? General is that which extends over everything.

4. When, therefore, is our faith general? Our faith is general when we not only believe some things, but everything that God has revealed and the Catholic Church proposes to our belief.

5. Is the Christian allowed to believe what pleases him, what he likes? No.

6. What should he rather believe? *Everything* that God has revealed, and that the Catholic Church proposes to his belief.

7. When is the faith of a Christian not general? When he believes some things, but doubts or denies others.

8. By what examples did I try to make this clear to you? If anyone should believe in God the Father, in God the Son, but not in the Holy Ghost, his faith would not be general.

9. Give another example. If anyone should doubt that one of the Sacraments was instituted by Christ, his faith would not be general.

10. Which of Christ's disciples had no general faith? Thomas had no general faith.

11. Why was Thomas' faith not general? Because he doubted the Resurrection of Christ.

12. With what can we compare faith when it is not general? With a chain in which a link is missing.

13. What does the chain lose when a link is missing? It loses its connection.

14. How should we believe what we have to believe? We should believe it firmly.

15. What is meant in general by firm? That in general is called firm which can be undone or separated only by great force or that which does not waver.

16. When is our faith firm? When we believe without doubting in the least.

17. When does a doubt usually exist in a man concerning an article of faith? When he cannot comprehend or grasp something with his understanding.

18. Should we only believe what we comprehend with our reason? No, we must also believe that which our reason cannot comprehend.

19. Who had a firm faith like this? Noe.

20. Why did Noe have so firm a faith? Because he built the ark without any hesitation, and did not doubt that God would allow the flood to break in.

21. Who else possessed such a firm faith? Abraham.

22. Why was Abraham's faith firm? Because he did not doubt that God would make him the head of a great people.

23. Can you give me an example of firm faith from the New Testament? The woman who suffered from an issue of blood and who was healed by Christ.

24. What did she firmly believe? She firmly believed that Christ could help her.

25. What did Christ say to her? "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

26. Give me another example from the New Testament. The centurion at Capharnaum.

27. What did he firmly believe? That Christ could restore health to his servant even without seeing him.

28. For that reason what did Christ say to him? "Verily I have not found such great faith in Israel."

29. Why did Christ say "in Israel"? Because the centurion was a heathen.

30. When, therefore, anyone believes firmly, what does not spring up in his heart? No doubts spring up within him.

31. Are *all* doubts against faith a sin? No.

32. Which doubts against faith are not sins? Those which spring up against our will.

33. What should we do when doubts about faith arise in us against our wills as temptations? We should immediately oppose them with a determined will to believe everything that God has revealed and the Catholic Church proposes to our belief.

34. What else are we obliged to do that no doubts concerning faith may exist in us? We must avoid all those persons, places, and occasions by which doubts about faith might arise in our minds.

35. What should be the third quality of our faith? Our faith should be living.

36. When is our faith living? Our faith is living when we live up to it, *i. e.*, do good and avoid evil as our faith prescribes.

37. What is contrary to a living faith? A dead faith.

38. When is our faith dead? When we do not live up to it.

39. What does St. James say about a living and dead faith? St. James says: "As the body without the soul is dead, so is faith without words dead."

40. By what examples did I strive to make this clearer to you? When anyone believes that God is our Father, he ought to have a childlike reverence for God.

41. When this is not the case, how is our faith? Our faith is dead.

42. Give me another example. If a person believes that God is omnipresent he ought to fear God.

43. How is his faith otherwise? Otherwise his faith is dead.

44. What does a dead faith resemble? A dead faith is like a barren tree.

45. What does a living faith resemble? A living faith resembles a fruitful tree.

46. What does a fruitful tree bring forth? It brings forth leaves, blossoms, and fruit.

47. What does a barren tree bring forth? A barren tree brings forth neither leaves, nor blossoms, nor fruit.

48. Of what use is a barren tree? It is of no use.

49. What is done with a barren tree? It is cut down and cast into the fire.

50. What is the fourth quality of our faith. Our faith should be steadfast.

51. When do we say that a person is steadfast? When he allows nothing to change his views and principles, nor to bend his will.

52. When is a person steadfast in the faith? When he allows nothing to induce him to fall away from the faith.

53. By what may a person be tempted to apostatize? By promises.

54. By what else? By threats.

55. Anything further? By torture and by death.

56. What persons showed a really steadfast faith? The Holy Martyrs.

57. How did they show a steadfast faith? Because they let nothing induce them to deny their Christian faith.

58. Name one of these Martyrs to me. St. Lawrence.

59. What agonizing death did he have to suffer. He was roasted on a gridiron.

60. What happened in Japan in the year 1590? 20,000 Christians were crucified, or burned.

61. How many of them apostatized? Not a single one.

62. Could such terrible times return again? Yes, they might come again.

63. What would you have to do if they really should return? We should have to be as steadfast in the faith as the Holy Martyrs were.

64. To what can you compare those whose faith is not steadfast? They are like a vacillating reed.

65. What does the wind do to a vacillating reed? It blows it hither and thither.

66. How firmly does a steadfast faith stand? As firm as an oak.

67. Like anything else? As firm as a rock in the midst of the sea.

The catechism asks in continuation: "What leads to falling away from the faith?" and gives the answer: 1. *Pride and an over-curious reasoning about the mysteries of our holy religion.*

As pride exalts itself above all things, and humbles itself at nothing, it will not subject itself to the light of faith. It speaks as the Egyptian king Pharaoh once did when he asked: "Who is the Lord whom I ought to obey? I know of none."

As water extinguishes a flame, so does pride extinguish the light of faith. It was *pride* which caused the fall of our first parents; they wanted to be like God. It was pride which blinded the heretics and schismatics of every century and caused them to stray away from the true doctrine. Pride was also the cause of the fall of the bad angels, and cast them into hell. Over-curious reasoning about the mysteries of our holy religion consists in this, that a person wishes to grasp, comprehend and fathom with his mind the inscrutable mysteries of our holy religion. But this is impossible here below.

The essence of God is inscrutable, the mysteries of our holy religion are incomprehensible. For this reason the legend tells us how St. Augustine, the great Doctor of the Church, was reproved, because he tried to search into the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. He was walking on the seashore, when he beheld a little boy who was busily pouring the water of the sea into a little hole. "What are you doing there?" St. Augustine asked the child.

The child replied: "I am trying to put the sea into this little hole."

"My dear child!" said St. Augustine, "you are surely not so foolish as to imagine that possible?" The child replied, however: "As impossible as it is for me to pour the sea into this little hole, so is it just as impossible for you to investigate the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity." With these words the child vanished. It was an angel, who at God's command was to teach St. Augustine that man's reason, with all its penetration, is not capable of sounding a mystery of our holy religion. We may, however, reflect upon the mysteries of our holy religion so as to render them plainer and clearer.

But to solve the doubts which arise in us about the truths of our faith, we should hold by the decision of the Church which is inspired by the Holy Ghost.

The second cause which leads to falling away from faith is: *Neglect of religious duties.* Under this head belong: the frequent reception of the Sacraments, diligent hearing of the word of God, attending the services of the Church, and especially prayer. Now the more lukewarm a Christian is in fulfilling his religious duties, the more he strays away from God, until finally he falls away from God entirely. This sort of person is like a stone that rolls down a mountain. It rolls quicker and quicker, until at last no one can stop it in its descent. Just as this disturbs everything in its way, and draws other stones in its path with it into the abyss, so is it not sufficient for a fallen away Catholic to go to ruin himself, but he seeks to draw others with him to perdition.

A lukewarm Christian resembles the flame of a lamp in which there is no oil. It burns feebler and feebler the less oil there is, until at last it goes out altogether when the last drop of oil is consumed. Faith decreases thus in a lukewarm Christian; he becomes more and more indifferent about God and everything pertaining to his salvation, until at last there is nothing left of his faith.

Worldly-mindedness, and a vicious life lead also to a falling away from Catholic belief. Worldly-mindedness is chiefly directed towards the satisfying of sensual desires, according to the words of the Apostle: "Everything that is in the world is concupiscence of the eyes, concupiscence of the flesh, and the pride of life." As, however, money is necessary for the satisfying of desires and passions, avarice is as a rule connected wtih it, that vice, which seeks only after the possession of transitory goods. Thereby the human heart clings more and more to Mammon, which ensnares the whole soul, and dis-

turbs, or at last stifles, every divine emotion. For this reason the Holy Scripture says: "We cannot serve God and Mammon." And in another part of the Scriptures it says: "Those who wish to become rich fall into temptation, and into the snares of Satan."

That worldly-mindedness does not agree with a religious mode of living is to be gathered from the words which Christ addressed to the young man: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, and sell what thou hast, and give it to the poor, and come, follow Me." A vicious life also leads to a falling away from God. A person who is addicted to sin and vice will have nothing to do with the faith, for it tells him: "There is a just God who will punish vice in eternity." Very many persons fall away from the faith sooner than determine to abandon their vicious lives. In the same way the idol of the miser is money, of the glutton, food and drink, of the unchaste the satisfying of his sensual desires. Such men give up their faith in God, and set up their passion as their idol, to which they sacrifice their time and strength, substance and honor, health and life, peace and quiet, and even their eternal salvation. Another cause of falling away from God is the *reading of bad books.*

As natural poison kills the body, and as a poisonous snake by his bite causes death and destruction, so is it with bad books. They make youth acquainted with vice, represent it as a virtue, they excuse vice, and make virtue ridiculous. They tear away by force the root of all good from the human heart, disturb therein faith, hope and charity, and the desire for everything more exalted, and lead finally to an entire apostasy from God.

Bad books should be exterminated like weeds. Thus the Emperor Constantine and the Church authorities of Nice, had the books of the heretic Arius burnt, so that no one else should be induced to apostatize on account of them.

Finally, *associating with bad persons* leads to a falling away from God. The wise Sirach says: "He who touches pitch defiles himself." Solomon, the wise and great king, fell into sin and idolatry, because he was careless in associating with heathen women, who led him into sin. "Evil communications corrupt good morals," says the proverb. It is not enough for the unbelievers to throw themselves into the abyss, they drag others with them.

The catechism further asks: In what way should we show particularly that our faith is firm and steadfast?

The answer says: By never denying it, not even in appearance.

To deny one's faith means either from fear of man or love of gain or other reasons, to deny being a Catholic. We deny our faith in appearance when we behave exteriorly as if we were not Christians, but at the same time remain a Christian at heart.

It is also a denial of the faith when we are ashamed to make the sign of the cross in the presence of others, to kneel down at the elevation or in presence of the Most Blessed Sacrament, or to say our grace before and after meals, or to observe the days of fasting and abstinence, and so on. A good Catholic confesses his faith upon every occasion, in words and deeds, and does not allow himself, through the fear of man or other causes, to deny his faith. He is mindful of Christ's words: "Everyone that confesses me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven. But he that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven." He, then, who is ashamed of his Saviour, who has suffered so much on account of his sins, He will also be ashamed of him when He comes again at the end of the world in His glory.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What leads to apostasy from the Catholic faith? First, pride and an over-curious reasoning about the mysteries of our holy religion.
2. Why does pride lead to apostasy? Because pride will not bend before the light of faith.
3. What alone do the proud believe? They only believe what they can comprehend.
4. And what they cannot comprehend? That they will not believe.
5. What comparison did I make use of? As water extinguishes a flame, so does pride extinguish the light of faith.
6. What example did I take from history? The example of our first parents and the bad angels.
7. What was the origin of their fall? Pride.
8. Whom else did pride lead to apostasy? The heretics and schismatics.
9. What is understood by an over-curious reasoning about the mysteries of our holy religion? When a person tries to comprehend and fathom the mysteries of our holy religion.
10. Name some of the mysteries of religion. The mystery of Incarnation of the Son of God, the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, the Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.
11. Why are these mysteries? Because we cannot understand them with our reason.
12. When will our faith be changed into seeing? In the next world, in eternal bliss.
13. Why not in this world? Because the ways of God are unsearchable.

14. Which mystery did St. Augustine strive to fathom? The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity.

15. By whom was he reproved? By an angel.

16. What can you tell me about this? (The child relates the occurrence as it has been already told.)

17. Are we not allowed to reflect upon the mysteries of our holy religion? Yes, we may reflect upon them.

18. With what intention should we reflect upon them? That they may become plainer and clearer to us.

19. What ought we to do when we have a doubt concerning the truths of faith? We should abide by the decision of the Church.

20. Why should we abide by the Church's decision? Because the Holy Ghost leads and directs her.

21. What is the second reason that persons fall away from their faith? The neglect of their religious duties.

22. What is meant by neglecting religious duties? When a person no longer prays, does not go to church, nor hear the word of God nor receive the Sacraments.

23. What comparison did I employ? That of a stone which rolls down the mountain.

24. When a heavy stone loosens itself how does it roll? Faster and faster.

25. Who can stop its fall? No one is able to do it.

26. What does such a stone do in its descent? It takes other stones along with it into the abyss.

27. What did I want to point out to you by this? That a bad man causes others to fall away from faith.

28. What other comparison did I make use of? That of a flame.

29. How long does a light burn in a lamp? As long as the oil lasts.

30. But if no more oil is poured in, what happens? The flame goes out.

31. And what happens when a Christian neglects his religious duties? He falls away from God and his faith.

32. What else leads to falling away from God and faith? Worldly-mindedness and a vicious life.

33. Towards what is worldly-mindedness, *i. e.*, the mind of most persons directed? Towards satisfying their sensual desires.

34. What is necessary for the satisfying of their sensual desires? For that money is necessary.

35. What vice then is generally united to worldly-mindedness? Avarice.

36. For what does the avaricious person strive? For the possession of temporal goods.

37. What other name can we give to temporal goods? Mammon.

38. What does the Holy Scripture say about Mammon? Holy Scripture says: "Man cannot serve God and Mammon."

39. What does Holy Scripture say further about the avaricious? Holy Scripture says: "Those who want to be rich fall into temptation and the snares of the devil."

40. Can you give me a passage of Scripture about the rich not entering into the kingdom of heaven? Holy Scripture says: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

41. According to this could no rich persons go to Heaven? That is not the meaning of the words.

42. Which kind of rich persons cannot go to heaven? Those who on account of their riches forget God.

43. Which of the rich will surely be saved? Those who employ their wealth in the practice of good works.

44. What did Jesus say therefore to the rich youth? "If thou wouldst be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, give it to the poor, and come, follow Me."

45. What further leads to a falling away from God and faith? A vicious life.

46. How did I explain this to you? A person who is addicted to vice does not want to know anything about faith.

47. Why not? Because the faith tells him that there is a just God who severely punishes vice.

48. What idol does the miser serve? Temporal goods.

49. What idols does the intemperate man serve? Eating and drinking and sensuality.

50. And the unchaste man? His sensual desires and animal longings.

51. And what do they sacrifice to these idols? Everything that they have.

52. What else did I say led to apostasy? The reading of bad books.

53. What is understood by bad books? By bad books we mean those that contain bad principles.

54. To what did I compare such bad books? To poison.

55. What are the effects of poison? It kills the body.

56. What are the effects of reading bad books? It leads to a falling away from God and faith.

57. What ought we to do with a bad book? We should destroy it, burn it.

58. Who acted in this wise? The Church authorities of Nice, and the Emperor Constantine.

59. What books did they destroy? The writings of Arius.

60. Why did they have these books burnt? That others might not thereby be led to apostatize.

61. Which is the last cause of apostasy? The society of bad persons.

62. What proverb can you mention to prove this? "He who touches pitch defileth himself."

63. What was that wise king of the Old Testament called who experienced this? King Solomon.

64. By whom was he led into evil? By the heathen women with whom he associated.

65. Why is the companionship with bad and irreligious persons so dangerous? Because they lead other persons into evil.

66. How do we recognize a bad person? By his words and conversations.

67. In what way ought we particularly to show that our faith is firm and steadfast? By never denying it even in appearance.

68. What does it mean to deny one's faith? It means: to deny being a Christian.

69. What can lead a man to deny his faith? Fear and avarice.

70. How can we deny our faith in appearance? When we behave exteriorly as if we were not Christians, though at heart we are Christians.

71. What else constitutes a denial of the faith? Being ashamed in the presence of others to pray, to make the sign of the cross, to kneel at the elevation, and before the Blessed Sacrament.

72. Further? Being ashamed to say grace before and after meals and to fast and abstain.

73. What did Jesus say of those persons who deny their faith? Jesus said: "He that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven."

74. What did Jesus say of those who confess their faith? Jesus said: Everyone that confesses me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven."

75. Is there any particular sign by which the Christian confesses his faith? Yes, the sign of the cross.

The explanation of the sign of the cross will be given in the next religious instruction.

VI.

The Sign of the Cross.

Dear Children:—I told you in the last instruction that I would to-day explain to you the sign of the cross. The sign of the cross is that sign whereby we outwardly profess that we are Christians.

Before the time of Christ the cross was a sign of shame, ignorance and dishonor. It was branded upon the forehead of criminals, so as to disgrace them before the whole world. But this was not to remain so. Through Jesus, the sign of the cross became honorable. Religious history relates the following: The Emperor Constantine, while yet a heathen, took the field against his enemy Maxentius. But the enemy's army was far stronger than his. Then Constantine prayed fervently to the true God for His assistance, and behold there was visible in the heavens to him and his whole army a brilliant cross with the inscription: "By this sign shalt thou conquer!" Constantine had a standard made like this cross, and had it carried before him in battle. He fought the enemy courageously and defeated him. From that time (it was in the year 312 after Christ,) Constantine was the champion and protector of Christianity. The cross now became a sign of honor and victory. It gleamed upon the crown of Constantine, and was displayed at Rome, which formerly was the headquarters of paganism, high up the Capitoline Hill, to proclaim the triumph of the crucified Saviour to the whole world. The word "cross" has a threefold meaning.

First, it signifies the *wood*, the *cross beams*, which Jesus dragged

up to Calvary, under the weight of which He sank again and again to the ground, to which He was nailed with hands and feet, and upon which He hung for three hours in the most excruciating agony, until He drooped His head and died.

Secondly, it signifies the *sign* which we make with our hand to remind us of the sacrifice of the cross, or as a blessing.

Thirdly, the word "cross" signifies that suffering and tribulation with which Divine Providence visits us, and which we should bear with patience and resignation to the will of God. Therefore Christ said: "Take up thy cross, and follow me!"

The sign of the cross can be made in two ways, hence we speak of a *"large"* and a *"small"* cross. The large cross is made thus: We put the right hand to the forehead, then on the breast, and then to the left and right shoulders, saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." We touch the forehead to signify that Christ, the Son of God, was from all eternity with the Father, and is equal to the Father in His essence. When we touch the breast it should remind us that Jesus descended from heaven into the virginal womb of Mary and became incarnate. The touching of both shoulders should remind us that the Holy Ghost proceeds at the same time from the Father and from the Son. We pass from the left to the right side, to remind us that by the death of Christ upon the cross, we were brought from the left of damnation, to the right of salvation.

The small cross is made in this wise: We open our right hand, and with the thumb we make the sign of a small cross: 1, upon the forehead; 2, the mouth; 3, the breast. This also has its meaning: 1, we make the sign of the cross upon the forehead. The forehead is part of the head which is the seat of reason. Words come from the mouth, and desires and intentions from the heart. We should remember, therefore, that all our thoughts, words, and works should have reference to God, that we should know God with our reason, confess Him with our mouth, and love Him with our heart.

Never make the sign of the cross thoughtlessly! The priest gives every Benediction and blessing in and out of the Church in the form of the cross. This is to remind us that every blessing comes to us by the grace of the Most Blessed Trinity, and that by the death of Christ we partake in the greatest blessing and in the greatest benefits. The sign of the cross reminds us of *two* of the most important mysteries of our holy religion, namely:

1. The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity; and 2. The Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

The custom of making the sign of the cross is very old and descends from the Apostolic times. From the earliest days of the Church the faithful have been baptized, anointed, consecrated and blessed with the sign of the cross.

When should we make the sign of the cross?

It is good and wholesome to make it frequently, especially when we rise, and when we go to bed, before and after prayers, and in all temptations and dangers.

When we make the sign of the cross on rising, it ought to remind us:

1. That we should recommend ourselves to God's protection during the day.

2. That during the day we should do only what will tend to the praise, honor and glory of the Most Blessed Trinity; and

3. That we should bear with patience and for the love of God all sufferings and contradictions, all crosses which God sends us, and especially the difficulties of our state of life and calling.

When we make the sign of the cross at night before lying down to sleep, we should commend ourselves thereby during the night to the Almighty protection of God, in which we shall sleep safely and without fear.

The sign of the cross at night reminds us of the blessings which the Most Blessed Trinity has granted us during the day, and exhorts us to return fervent thanks for them at the end of the day.

The cross at night also reminds us of the false steps, of the great and small sins which we committed during the day whereby we offended God and nailed Him afresh to the cross, and exhorts us thereby to renounce our sinful lives. How unfortunate would it be for us if God were to call us to His judgment seat during the night?

Thirdly, we make the sign of the cross before and after prayers. This should remind us of the words of Christ: "Whatsoever you ask the Father *in my name,* that He will give you." But it should also remind us of the merciful mediation of our divine Saviour with our heavenly Father, without which our prayer could not expect a hearing.

Fourthly, it is a beautiful custom to make the sign of the cross before every important undertaking. Therefore the Apostle St. Paul says: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things

to the glory of God." Ought we to be ashamed, then, to make the sign of the cross before leaving the house or undertaking a journey? Is it a disgrace if we bless the bread that we are about to eat with the sign of the cross?

Certainly not! Of course the custom of making the sign of the cross must not be used for superstitious purposes. For instance, it would be foolishness and sinful for a person to make the sign of the cross over the bread before it is baked, with the sole intention and belief of protecting it from witchcraft.

Fifthly, we should make the sign of the cross in all temptations and dangers. Temptations are those occasions whereby we are encouraged to sin. Now sin being the greatest evil, being indeed even greater than the death of the body, it is very evident that if we are afraid of sinning, we ought to make the sign of the cross so as to ward off the temptation. If it was through the sign of the cross that the Emperor Constantine was helped to gain the victory, why should it not help us to gain the victory over our greatest enemy?

However, not only in dangers which threaten our salvation, but in bodily dangers, too, we should make the sign of the cross. Everyone in danger looks for protection and help. And if in any great danger we commend ourselves to the protection of the Almighty, to Him who can protect and help us in every necessity, is this a sin or foolishness? Certainly not. Never be ashamed, therefore, in the time of danger to have recourse to God; He will not let you be disgraced.

Why is it wholesome to make the sign of the cross frequently? Answer: "Because, by devoutly making the sign of the cross, we arm ourselves against the snares of the devil, and draw down the blessings of heaven upon us."

The sign of the cross should be made devoutly, and not thoughtlessly. When it is made devoutly it arms us against the snares of the devil. We use arms to combat a powerful enemy or opponent. The devil is a powerful opponent of ours, for his thoughts and actions are constantly directed towards accomplishing our ruin, *i.e.*, to lead us into temptation. If we do not want to be overcome in the combat with the enemy, we must be prudent, and fight valiantly. There is no better weapon to use against the devil than the sign of the cross. The cross is also a sign of victory. Before it the tempter flies, by the sign of the cross he loses his power.

Through the sign of the cross the blessing of heaven descends upon us.

A cup of poisoned wine was once handed to St. John. He made the sign of the cross over it, drank the contents, and it did not hurt him. In this way are all the blessings of the Church given, by the sign of the cross.

A cross is given to the dying, to encourage them to be resigned to the divine will, and to confide in the divine mercy.

Who ever suffered more, or more innocently than Jesus Christ? Can we then have a more exalted model in death?

We also adorn the graves of the departed with a cross. The cross upon a grave reminds us, in the first place, of the resurrection of Jesus, and at the same time of our own resurrection from amongst the dead. Jesus by His resurrection triumphed over death, and on the tree of the cross gained the victory over it, and we also, and all the dead, shall rise again from the grave and triumph over death. The cross upon a grave should remind us also that the departed believed in Christ, and died trusting in Him.

The Catholic Church has instituted two feast days for a particular veneration of the holy cross, namely, the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, and the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, which is celebrated annually on the 3rd of May, reminds us of the memorable occasion of the finding of the true cross, by St. Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine the Great. The second is the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, which is celebrated yearly on the 14th of September, and reminds us how the pious Emperor Heraclius once entered victoriously into Jerusalem, about the year 629 after Christ, and himself carried the holy cross which had been regained from the Persians, up to Mount Calvary.

I will now tell you what a particle of the cross is: The word particle comes from the Latin word "particula," *i. e.,* a small portion. A particle of the cross is therefore a small portion, a splinter, of the true cross, which generally is preserved in a receptacle covered with glass, and presented to the faithful to kiss, so that we may return thanks to the divine Redeemer for His agonizing death upon the cross, and obtain His blessing. You have doubtless heard of the so-called "Mission crosses"?

These are erected when a Mission closes in a parish. These Mission crosses are to remind us of the good instructions and exhorta-

tions which were given during the Mission, as well as the good resolutions which we then made. We will now have a repetition of to-day's lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the sign of the cross.

2. What signification has the word "cross"? The word "cross" has a threefold meaning.

3. Can you name them? The word "cross" signifies first, wood, the cross beams, which Jesus carried up to Mount Calvary, and upon which He redeemed mankind.

4. Secondly? "Cross" signifies further that sign with which we sign ourselves or other things as a blessing.

5. Thirdly? The word "cross" signifies the sufferings and contradictions with which divine Providence visits mankind.

6. What was the cross before Christ? It was a sign of shame and dishonor.

7. Who were branded then with the sign of the cross? Criminals and malefactors.

8. Who were put to death or executed upon the cross? Criminals.

9. Through whom did the cross become honorable? Through the Emperor Constantine the Great.

10. Tell me what you know of this incident. (The pupil will relate the incident as already told).

11. In how many ways can we make the sign of the cross? In two ways.

12. Namely? The large and small cross.

13. How is the large cross made? We put our right hand to our forehead, then to the breast, and then to the left and right shoulders, saying, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

14. Of what should we be reminded by touching the forehead? That Christ was with the Father from all eternity and is of the same essence.

15. What does it signify when we take our hand from the forehead to the breast? It signifies that Jesus descended from heaven into the Virginal womb of Mary and became incarnate.

16. And of what does the touching of both shoulders remind us? That the Holy Ghost proceeds equally from the Father and from the Son.

17. Why do we move the hand from the left to the right shoulder? This should remind us that by the death of Jesus upon the cross we have been brought from the left of damnation to the right of salvation.

18. How is the small cross made? With the thumb of the right hand we make the sign of the cross upon the forehead, upon the mouth, and upon the breast, saying these words: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

19. Where do we first of all sign ourselves with this small sign of the cross? Upon the forehead or head.

20. Which power of the soul has its seat in the head? Reason.

21. Why then do we make the sign of the cross upon the forehead? Because with our reason we should know God.

22. For what do we use our mouth? We speak with the mouth.

23. Why do we make the sign of the cross upon the mouth? Because with our mouth we should confess God.

24. Why do we make the sign of the cross upon the breast? So as to remind ourselves that we ought to love God with our whole heart.

25. What other signification has the small cross? That all our thoughts, our words, and actions should tend towards God.

26. Upon what occasion does the priest make the sign of the cross? At all exorcisms and blessings.

27. Why does the priest give all blessings with the sign of the cross? So as to remind us that all blessings come to us by the grace of the Most Blessed Trinity.

28. Of what else should we be reminded by the sign of the cross? Of the two most important mysteries of our holy religion.

29. Which are these two mysteries? 1. The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. 2. The mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God.

30. From what times does the pious custom of making the sign of the cross originate? From the Apostolic times.

31. How old, therefore, is this beautiful custom? As old as the Church herself.

32. For what ceremonies did the Apostles use the sign of the cross? They baptized, anointed, consecrated, and blessed with the sign of the cross.

33. When ought we to make the sign of the cross? First upon rising and going to bed.

34. When do we rise? In the morning, when the day begins.

35. When do we go to bed, to sleep? At night, when the day is done.

36. In whose name should we begin the day? In God's name.

37. In whose name should we end the day and lie down to rest? In God's name.

38. Of what should we remind ourselves when we make the sign of the cross upon rising? That we commend ourselves to the protection of God during the day.

39. And of what else? That during the day we should only do that which tends to the honor and glory of the Blessed Trinity.

40. What works, then, should we strive to perform during the day? Only good works.

41. What ought we to refrain from during the day? We must refrain from sin.

42. Of what else should the cross remind us upon rising? Of the trials and afflictions which God sends us.

43. How ought we to bear the trials and afflictions which God sends us? With patience and resignation to the divine will.

44. What are the words of Jesus in relation to the cross? Jesus said: "Take up thy cross, and follow Me."

45. What then do these words of Jesus signify: "Take up thy cross"? They mean that we should bear all our sufferings patiently.

46. And what does the sign of the cross remind us of at night? That we should commend ourselves to God's protection during the night.

47. Of what else does it remind us? Of the many blessings to soul and body which we have received during the day from the Blessed Trinity.

48. What do we owe to the Most Blessed Trinity for this? We owe the greatest gratitude.

49. Do all persons live so piously during the day that it tends to the honor and glory of the Blessed Trinity? No, all persons do not live so piously.

50. What do they rather do during the day? They commit many sins.

51. Of what does the sign of the cross remind the sinner? It reminds him of his false steps.

52. In what crime does the sinner take part by his sins? In the crucifixion of our divine Saviour.

53. To what then should the sign of the cross exhort and encourage him? To the renouncing of his sinful life and to amendment.

54. What would happen to a person if he should have to appear before the judgment seat in his sins? He would be eternally damned.

55. At what other times should we make the sign of the cross? Before and after prayers.

56. Of what does the sign of the cross remind us before and after prayers? Of the merciful mediation of our divine Saviour.

57. Between whom is Jesus the mediator? Between God and man.

58. Why does our prayer to God require a mediator? Because the prayer of a sinner is not agreeable to God.

59. Without this mediation what would become of our prayer? It would not be heard.

60. At what other times do we make the sign of the cross? Before every important undertaking.

61. What is an important undertaking? One which might have serious consequences for us.

62. What does the Apostle, St. Paul, say therefore? The Apostle St. Paul says: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God."

63. What did St. Paul mean by these words? He meant thereby that we should do nothing without God.

64. How can the sign of the cross be misused? It can be misused for superstitious purposes.

65. For what superstitions do some persons misuse the sign of the cross? Some housewives make the sign of the cross over their bread-making to protect it from witchcraft.

66. What did Jesus do with the bread at the last supper? He blessed it.

67. At what other times should we make the sign of the cross? In all temptations.

68. What are temptations? Temptations are those occasions by which we are incited to sin.

69. What should we do in all temptations? We should make the sign of the cross.

70. Of what will the sign of the cross remind us? Of the great love of Jesus who died upon the cross on account of our sins.

71. How will the sign of the cross help us in temptation? It will help us to gain the victory.

72. What does that mean? We shall overcome the temptation.

73. Is it then so very important to overcome temptation? Yes, it is most important.

74. Why? Because by sin we draw down upon us eternal damnation.

75. Upon what other occasions should we make the sign of the cross? In all dangers.

76. What dangers do we include in these? We include bodily dangers.

77. What are bodily dangers? Those dangers which may cause injury to our bodies, or loss of our lives.

78. Give an example. During a thunder storm.

79. What do we generally do when lightning threatens? We make the sign of the cross.

80. Is this not superstition? No, it is not superstition.

81. Of what should the cross remind us? To commend ourselves to the almighty protection of God.

82. Why should we commend ourselves to the protection of God in every danger? Because God can help us in every danger by virtue of His omnipotence.

83. The catechism asks further: "Why is it wholesome to make the sign of the cross frequently"? 1. Because, by devoutly making the sign of the cross, we arm ourselves against the snares of the devil, and draw down the blessings of heaven upon us.

84. What is the sign of the cross called? It is called a weapon.

85. For what purpose do we need a weapon? To fight an enemy.

86. Who is our worst and greatest enemy? The devil or Satan.

87. Why is he our worst enemy? Because he strives to bring us to perdition.

88. In what way? By tempting us to commit sin.

89. Which is the best and surest weapon wherewith to combat the evil one? The sign of the cross.

90. Why? Because the wicked fiend flies before the sign of the cross, and through it loses his power.

91. What do we obtain by making the sign of the cross? The blessing of heaven.

92. What example did I relate to you? The example of St. John.

93. What was handed to him? A cup of poisoned wine.

94. How did St. John make the poisoned wine harmless? By making the sign of the cross.

95. Why do we give a cross to the dying? So as to encourage them in resignation to the divine will.

96. Why do we erect a cross over the grave? To remind us of our resurrection.

97. What feast days has the Catholic Church instituted for the especial veneration of the holy cross? The feast of the Finding and of the Exaltation of the Cross.

98. When is the Feast of the Finding of the Cross celebrated? On the 3d of May every year.

99. Of what event does this feast remind us? Of the finding of the holy cross.

100. By whom? By St. Helen.

101. Who was St. Helen? She was the mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great.

102. Upon which day every year is the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross celebrated? Upon the 14th of September.

103. Of what even does the feast remind us? It should remind us of the pious entry of the Emperor Heraclius into Jerusalem.

104. What did the Emperor Heraclius do upon this occasion? He himself carried the holy cross up to Mount Calvary.

105. What is a particle of the cross? It is a small part, a splinter of the true cross upon which Christ died.

106. What is done with these particles of the cross? They are offered to the faithful to kiss.

107. For what reason? That they may return fervent thanks to the Redeemer for His agonizing death upon the cross.

108. What are the so-called Mission crosses? They are crosses which are erected at the close of a mission.

109. Of what should these mission crosses remind us? Of the good instructions which we have heard at a Mission.

110. And what else? Of the good resolutions which we made at the Mission.

111. What is the moral application with which the catechism closes? Never to be ashamed of the Catholic faith, or of the sign of the cross.

Yes, think frequently of these words! Never be ashamed of the Catholic faith, or of the sign of the cross! Jesus, who was the Most Holy and the Most Just, did not hesitate, nor was He ashamed to carry it up to Calvary, although He was so weak that He fell three times to the ground under its weight. He was not ashamed to die like a criminal between two malefactors, as if He were the greatest amongst them. Jesus will come again with the sign of the cross, at the end of the world, or the day of Judgment, not indeed in poverty, as at His birth in Bethlehem, but with great power and majesty. And with this same sign He will lead all the just into everlasting happiness.

VII.

On the Apostles' Creed.

Dear Children:—We come to-day in the explanation of the Catechism to the teaching of the Apostles' Creed. A creed or profession of faith is, as the word implies, a formula whereby we profess our faith. This creed is called the Apostles' Creed because it has come down to us from the Apostles.

It contains in twelve articles those things which we as Catholics must above all know and believe, or in other words the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. The Apostles' Creed forms, as it were, a chain which consists of twelve individual parts. Each part is a whole of itself, but only in connection with the other parts does it form a chain. Now, as we cannot take away a part of a chain without breaking it, neither can we take away any article of the Apostles' Creed without injuring our holy faith.

We may make a general summary of the Apostle's Creed in a two-fold way, thus:

The first article treats of God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

The second to the seventh article treats of Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God, our Lord, His life, passion and death, His Resurrection and Ascension.

The eighth to the twelfth treats of the Holy Ghost, and what He accomplishes in the Church and by the Church.

Another summary can be made by dividing the Apostles' Creed into four chief parts, namely:

1. God, as Creator of the world, angels and men. (I. Article of faith.)

2. God as our Redeemer. (II., to VII. articles.)

3. God as our Sanctifier, through the Holy Ghost. (VIII., IX. and X. articles.)

4. God as our last end and Saviour in the four last things of man. (XI. and XII. articles.)

Holy tradition tells us concerning the origin of the Apostles' Creed that the Apostles composed it before they separated to go into the world, so as thereby to hold fast to the unity of the Catholic faith. For this reason the theologian Tertullian says: "We hold fast to that rule of faith which we have received from the Church, the Church from the Apostles, and the Apostles from Christ."

The Apostles' Creed is nothing short of an act of faith: "O my God, I believe firmly all the sacred truths," etc., etc. We should therefore say it frequently and devoutly because it puts before us briefly the truths of Catholic belief and serves thereby to strengthen and fortify our faith, especially in temptations against the faith.

Besides the Apostles' Creed, there are other professions of faith; they are:

1. The Nicene. This was composed at the Council of Nice in the year 325 by 318 bishops, against the heresy of Arius. It is only an enlargement of the Apostles' Creed, and is said by the priest during the holy sacrifice of the Mass upon certain days of the year.

2. The Athanasian. It bears this name because its authorship is ascribed to St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, who died in the year 373 after Christ. The priests say it often in their breviary.

3. The creed of Pope Pius IV., which was made known at the conclusion of the Council of Trent in the year 1564 by Pope Pius

IV. It contains the Nicene Creed, besides twelve other articles which were solemnly declared at the Council of Trent to be dogmas of faith. It is used principally at solemn professions of faith, such as the reception of a convert, at the consecration of priests and bishops.

The Apostles' Creed runs thus:

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,

2. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord,

3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,

4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.

5. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead.

6. He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

7. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

8. I believe in the Holy Ghost;

9. The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints;

10. The forgiveness of sins,

11. The resurrection of the body,

12. And life everlasting. Amen.

I will now give you the Nicene Creed. It runs thus:

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God of God; Light of Light; true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary: and was made man. He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried. The third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father: and He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead: of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

"And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son: who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified: who spake by the prophets. And one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess

one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

Besides this the Catholic Church has another beautiful symbolical profession of faith, namely the feast days, which she celebrates throughout the year in memory of the most important mysteries of the Christian faith.

The feasts of the Annunciation and Christmas, for instance, are solemn professions of the third article of the creed.

Holy week is a solemn profession of the fourth article. Easter is a solemn profession of the fifth, the feast of the Ascension is a solemn profession of the sixth, Pentecost a solemn profession of the eighth, and the feast of All Saints and All Souls a solemn profession of the ninth article.

We will see now by a repetition of to-day's instruction whether you have been attentive during the lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken? Of the Apostles' creed.

2. What is a profession of faith? A creed, or profession of faith, is a formula whereby we profess our faith.

3. Of what profession of faith have we spoken to-day? Of the Apostles' creed.

4. Why is it called the Apostles' creed? Because it comes down from the Apostles.

5. Or, in other words? Because the Apostles composed it.

6. When did the Apostles compose it? Before they went out into the world to teach.

7. With what intention did they compose the creed? So as to preserve the unity of the faith.

8. What does the Apostles' creed contain? It contains the fundamental truths of the Catholic religion.

9. How is the Apostles' creed divided? Into twelve articles, or truths of faith.

10. To what did I compare the Apostles' creed? To a chain, which consists of twelve links.

11. What happens when one of the links is taken from the chain? The chain loses its connection, it is broken.

12. What do we mean by this comparison? We mean that if we do not believe every article of the creed, our Christian faith is thereby shattered.

13. Can you give me a short summary of the creed? Yes, the Apostles' creed is comprised in four principal parts.

14. Name them. 1. God as Creator of the world, angels and men. 2. God as our Redeemer. 3. God as our Saviour, and 4. God as our Sanctifier.

15. Give me another summary of the Apostles' creed. The first article treats of God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. The second to the seventh treat of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. The eighth to the twelfth treat of the Holy Ghost, and of what He operates in and through the Church.

16. How can you prove to me that the creed comes down from the Apostles? The theologian Tertullian says: "We hold fast to that rule of faith, which we have received from the Apostles, and which they received from Christ."

17. Is the Apostles' creed also a prayer? Yes, it is as good a prayer, as an act of faith; "O my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths," etc.

18. If the creed is a prayer, what ought we to do? We ought to say it frequently.

19. For what purpose should we say it? To fortify ourselves in the Catholic faith.

20. Upon what occasions is it especially necessary to fortify ourselves in the faith? In temptations against the faith.

21. What are temptations against faith? (No answer.) *Teacher.* When a doubt arises within us, that this or that might be other than the Catholic Church teaches it to be, this is a temptation against the faith.

22. Now if such temptations beset you, and you say the creed devoutly, what good results will follow? We shall be fortified in our faith.

23. What injurious consequences must ensue if we do not resist temptations against the faith? We expose ourselves to the danger of falling away from the faith.

24. Are there other creeds besides the Apostles'? Yes, there are other creeds.

25. Name them. 1. The Nicene; 2. The Athanasian, and the creed of Pope Pius IV.

26. Whence does the Nicene creed obtain its name? From the Council of Nice.

27. When did that take place? In the year 325 after Christ.

28. Against what was the Nicene creed composed? Against the heresy of Arius.

29. In what did the heresy of Arius consist? He denied the divinity of Jesus.

30. Does the Nicene creed contain other or different dogmas of faith than the Apostles' creed? No, it contains no other dogmas of faith.

31. Why can it not contain any other doctrines of faith? Because the Catholic faith always remains the same.

32. From whom does the Athanasian creed derive its name? From St. Athanasius.

33. Who was St. Athanasius? He was Patriarch of Alexandria.

34. When was the creed of Pope Pius IV. composed? At the conclusion of the Council of Trent.

35. When did that take place? In the year 1564 after Christ.

36. Upon what occasions is the creed of Pope Pius IV. generally used? At solemn confessions of faith, at the reception of converts, at the consecration of bishops and priests.

37. Does the creed of Pope Pius IV. contain any other doctrines of faith than the Apostles' creed? No, it does not contain any other doctrines.

38. But does the Apostles' creed contain everything that a Catholic Christian must believe? No, it does not contain everything that we Catholics must believe.

39. Tell me, for instance, a Catholic doctrine which is not in the Apostles' creed? That Jesus Christ is present in the Holy Eucharist.

40. If a person were only to believe that which is in the Apostles' creed, and were to deny and reject everything else, what would that be? That would be a sin.

41. What does the Apostles' creed contain? It contains only the fundamental truths of our Catholic faith.

42. What other professions of faith does the Catholic Church celebrate? A symbolical profession of faith.

43. What do we mean by that? We mean the different feasts which the Catholic Church celebrates throughout the year.

44. What does the Catholic Church profess by the celebration of these feasts? She professes her belief in what the Apostles' creed contains.

45. Mention one of these feasts. The Annunciation.

46. What does the Church confirm by the celebration of this feast? The belief in the third article of the Apostles' creed.

47. What does this say? "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost."

48. Which feast refers still more to the third article of the creed? The feast of Christmas.

49. To what part of the third article does this feast refer? To the part, "born of the Virgin Mary."

50. What is the week preceding Easter called? It is called Holy Week.

51. Of what are we reminded in Holy Week? Of the bitter passion and death of our divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

52. Which article does this feast day refer to? To the fourth article.

53. What does it say? "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."

54. Which feast follows Holy Week? The feast of Easter.

55. Of what does Easter remind us? Of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

56. What does the Catholic Church profess by the celebration of Easter? She professes her belief in the fifth article of the creed.

57. What does this say? "The third day He rose again from the dead."

58. Which feast does the Church celebrate forty days after Easter? The feast of the Ascension.

59. What does the Catholic Church profess by the celebration of this feast? Her belief in the sixth article of the creed.

60. What does that say? "He ascended into heaven."

61. Which feast does the Church celebrate on the tenth day after the Ascension? The feast of Pentecost.

62. Of what does the feast of Pentecost remind us? Of the coming of the Holy Ghost.

63. With which article is this feast connected? With the eighth.

64. What does it say? "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

65. By which feasts does the Catholic Church profess her belief in a Holy Universal Church and a community of Saints? By the feasts of All Saints and All Souls.

66. With which article are these feasts connected? With the ninth article.

67. What does it say? I believe in the Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints.

Teacher.—I have now explained to you, dear children, in general the Apostles' Creed. You have heard why it is so-called and what it contains. In the following instructions each separate article will be explained in particular. The Apostles' Creed should serve as the foundation of your Catholic belief, you should say it often and gladly, especially when you are tempted to waver in the faith. In this case the Apostles' Creed will be for you a firm anchor to which you can cling. And as the Catholic Church by the feasts lends a special expression to her faith in the Apostles' Creed, so should your whole life bear testimony that the Apostles' Creed is the firm foundation-stone upon which your faith is built.

VIII.

First Article of Faith.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Dear Children:—After having explained the Apostles' creed in general in the last instruction, we shall now, following the plan of the catechism, explain each separate article in particular. So we begin to-day with the explanation of the first article, which says: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." To believe, is to hold as true whatever another tells us. To believe in God therefore, means to really think and confess that there is a God. The meaning of the first article could be expressed in other words thus: I believe and confess that there is a God, who is the Father of all mankind and the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, *i.e.*, of all created beings in heaven and upon earth. The catechism divides the first article into six paragraphs, or sub-divisions, and treats

1. Of God.
2. Of the three Divine Persons.
3. Of the creation, preservation and government of the world.
4. Of the angels.
5. Of our first parents and their fall.
6. Of the coming of the Redeemer.

The first paragraph of the first article treats therefore of God. The word "God" means "good," and because God is infinitely good, or also the supreme good, therefore He is called by preference good or God. To the question: "Who is God"? the catechism answers: "God is an infinitely perfect spirit, the Lord of heaven and earth, and the author of all good." This explanation of the nature of God is, however, only an imperfect one, because the actual nature of God is unfathomable, as we may learn from this passage of Holy Scripture: "Thou art great, O God, and thy thoughts are inaccessible." Moses once said to God: "Lord, show me thy glory;" and God answered him: "Thou canst not see my face, and live." (Exod. xxiii.)

Why do we call God a spirit? We call God a spirit because He has understanding and free will, but no body.

The characteristics or signs of a spirit are therefore understanding and free will, but no body. Understanding is the power of thinking: the will is the power to wish and to desire, and as a spirit has no body it is an invisible being to us human beings.

Holy Scripture says: "God is a spirit and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth." (John iv. 24.) As God is the most perfect spirit, He must therefore have the highest degree of understanding and the most perfect will. The catechism asks: "If God has no body, why does Holy Scripture speak of God's eyes, ears, hands," etc.

"It speaks thus so that human beings might more easily understand." These expressions are not to be taken literally but in a figurative sense. When Holy Scripture speaks of the eyes of God, "The eyes of the Lord are on them that fear Him" (Ps. xxxii. 18); and, "for the eyes of the Lord behold all the earth" (II. Chron. xvi. 9), the omniscience and Providence of God are thereby intimated.

When Holy Scripture speaks of the ears of God, "Give ear unto my prayer"! (Ps. xvi.1) the willingness of God to hear our prayers is intimated. When Holy Scripture speaks of God's hands, "Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every living creature" (Ps. cxliv. 16), it is to denote the infinite generosity and goodness of God. When Holy Scripture says, "Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool" (Isaias lxvi. 1), it expresses thereby the omnipresence and immensity of God. The expression, "mouth of God," signifies His veracity; the expression, "finger of God," His wisdom,

with which He rules and directs all things; and the expression, "heart of God" His infinite paternal love for mankind. Why do we say that God is an "infinitely perfect spirit"? We say this because God is not in a certain measure good like creatures, but unites all good qualities in Himself without measure or number. We call perfect that which is not wanting in anything, which can neither be blamed nor found fault with. God is, however, more than perfect. He is infinitely perfect, for in Him is found united every imaginable good without measure. For this reason God says: "I am God, and there is no God beside, neither is there the like to me."! (Is. xlvi. 9.) The angels, for instance, are good and perfect spirits; but their holiness and perfection cannot in the least degree be compared with the perfection of God. Their perfection as compared with God's is as a dull lamplight compared with the brilliancy of the majestic sun, or as a drop of water compared with an immense ocean. Name the attributes or perfections of God? These: God is eternal and unchangeable, omnipresent, omniscient, or all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful; He is infinitely holy and just; infinitely good, merciful, and long-suffering; infinitely true and faithful.

These attributes and perfections present God to us:

a. As He is, eternal, unchangeable, holy, omnipresent, all-knowing, and as such He is to be adored.

b. According to His active behavior, just, kind, merciful, long-suffering, true, and faithful, and as such He is to be imitated.

The first divine attribute is eternity. What means "God is eternal"? God is eternal means that He is always, that is without beginning and without end. Holy Scripture says: "Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed; from eternity to eternity Thou art God." (Ps. lxxxix. 2.) Eternity is an existence without beginning and without end. Eternity is for us an unfathomable thing. If we were to go back as many thousands of years as there are leaves upon the trees, drops in the ocean, or grains of sand upon the earth, this would be a prodigious number of years, but still only a trifle compared to eternity.

The existence of God has no bounds in the past and no bounds in the future. He is always. No period of time can be imagined from which we could say: "From then God is; His existence began here. As we cannot say of a ball, there it begins, and there it leaves off, neither can we say of God: "He had His beginning here

or shall come to an end there." As the most perfect Being God must be absolutely eternal, for if His existence has had a beginning, there must be a more exalted, more perfect, mightier Being who has called Him into existence. He would then have been created by a higher Being and dependent and therefore He would no longer be God. The Psalmist David says of the eternity of God: "Thou, O Lord, didst found the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. These perish, but Thou remainest eternal; thy years are without end." The eternal which has no beginning and no end, is opposed to the transitory: *i.e.,* everything which has a beginning and sooner or later will come to an end. Take for example an old house! There was a time when it was not, and a time will come when it will be no more. Look at the earth! There was a time when it was not there, and a time shall come when it shall be no more. Beings which have had a beginning, but will have no end are called immortal; for instance, angels, and the souls of men. These had a beginning, they were called into existence by God, but they will have no end. Besides God no one is eternal; this perfection belongs to God alone. The second perfection of God is this, He is unchangeable. That is unchangeable, which in its being as well as in its characteristics and exterior appearances does not and cannot change, which remains always the same. Unchangeable is the contrary to changeable. That is changeable, which in its nature, in its constituent parts and exterior characteristics is subject to change, to alteration. How changeable the weather is, for instance! One hour the sun shines brightly, and the next brings storm and rain. How changeable the earth is in its different seasons. In the winter it is covered with snow and ice, in summer with flowers. In the spring it awakens to a new life, in the autumn it dies again. How changeable is man! A person is in good health to-day, to-morrow he is sick. To-day we are good and to-morrow bad. To-day the pupil is diligent, to-morrow idle and lazy. To-day we have a friend, to-morrow an enemy. To-day a man is rich, in a year's time he is a beggar. And thus you can examine whatever you like, everything is changeable and subject to alteration. God alone changes not. He is unchangeable.

a. Unchangeable in His nature, and

b. Unchangeable in His desires.

God is unchangeable in His nature; that means that He can neither increase nor decrease in His perfections, He cannot gain

any new perfection, nor can He lose the perfections which He possesses.

c. God is also unchangeable in His decrees; that means: What God in His eternal wisdom has once determined remains fixed for all eternity. Therefore God says through the Prophet Isaias: "My counsel shall stand, and all my will shall be done." (Is. xlvi. 10.)

The thought that God is eternal should encourage us to place our confidence in God, and not in temporal or perishable things. These vain and perishable things are riches, honors, ability, beauty, the favor of men, etc., etc. All these things are only transitory, they have no lasting and real worth. But God remains eternally omnipotent, He can always help us; He remains eternally good, He will always help us; He remains eternally faithful, He will always help us. We may and should therefore place our whole confidence in Him.

Full of trust we ought to commend our destiny to God, for He has resolved upon that which is best for us from all eternity. The thought that God is eternal should encourage us to desist from evil. When God says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," it is an earnest exhortation to the sinner to cease from evil and to think of the eternal chastisement which awaits those who break God's laws. We will now repeat the lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What is the first article of the creed? The first article is: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth."

2. What does it mean "to believe"? To believe means to accept that what we are told as true.

3. How then could we express the meaning of the first article in other words? "I hold as true and confess that there is one God Who is the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth."

4. How many truths accordingly does the first article contain? It contains three truths.

5. Name them. 1. That there is a God; 2. That God is our Father; 3. That He is the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth.

6. How is the first article divided in the catechism? Into six paragraphs or sub-divisions.

7. Of what does the first paragraph treat? The first paragraph treats of God.

8. Whence does the name "God" come? The name God comes from good.

9. What then does the word "God" signify? That He is exceedingly good or the supreme good.

10. What answer does the catechism give to the question "what is God"? "God is an infinitely perfect Spirit, the Lord of Heaven and earth, and the Author of all good."

11. How many things are contained in this answer? Three things are contained in this answer.

12. What are they? 1. That God is a Spirit; 2. That God is infinitely perfect; 3. That He is the Lord of Heaven and earth, and that He is the Author of all good.

13. God therefore is a Spirit. Why do we call God a Spirit? We call God a Spirit because He has understanding and free will, but no body.

14. What are the characteristics of a Spirit? A Spirit has: 1. Understanding; 2. Free will; 3. No body.

15. What is understanding? Understanding is the power to think.

16. What is the will? The will is the power to wish and to desire.

17. Are there other spirits besides God? Yes, there are other spirits besides God.

18. Who are they? Angels, and the souls of men.

19. What is the difference between these and God? These spirits are not perfect as God is.

20. What is common to all spirits? The absence of a body.

21. Are they visible or invisible? They are invisible.

22. You say that God is a Spirit. Now the Holy Scripture speaks of God's eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. According to this, God would have a body? No, Holy Scripture only speaks thus so as to make it easier for us to understand.

23. Give a passage where Holy Scripture speaks of God's eyes? "The eyes of the Lord are far brighter than the sun, beholding round about all the ways of men, and the bottom of the deep, and looking into the hearts of men, into the most hidden parts." (Eccl. xxiii. 24.)

24. What is expressed by this verse? That God sees all things.

25. In what part of Scripture are God's ears spoken of? "Give ear unto My prayer!" (Ps. xvi. 1.)

26. What is the meaning of this verse? The meaning of this verse is that God will hear our prayer.

27. Mention a part of Scripture where God's hands are spoken of? Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every living creature. (Ps. cxliv. 16.)

28. To what does this verse refer? To the benefits and blessings which mankind receives from God.

29. In what part of Scripture are God's feet mentioned? "Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool." (Is. lxvi. 1.)

30. What is the meaning of this expression? It means the omnipresence of God in heaven and upon earth.

31. What does the expression, God's mouth, denote? It denotes the veracity of God.

32. What does the expression, Heart of God denote? It denotes His great paternal love of men.

33. You must not imagine that God really has eyes, ears, hands, feet, a mouth and so on; all these expressions are only to be taken figuratively. We believe and confess that God is not merely a Spirit, but we confess that He is an infinitely perfect spirit.

34. What is perfect? That is perfect which is wanting in nothing, where no fault is to be found.

35. Why do we call God infinitely perfect? Because God is not like creatures, good only in a certain measure, but He unites in Himself all good qualities without measure or number.

36. Is it possible to think of, or name a perfection which God has not? No, God has all perfections in Himself.

37. How does He possess them, in what degree? In the highest degree?

38. Why do we call God still more an infinitely perfect Spirit? Because men cannot comprehend the infinite perfections of God.

39. How can you prove this? By this passage of Holy Scripture: "Thou art great, O God, and Thy thoughts are inaccessible."

40. What does this verse mean? This verse means that the infinite perfections of God are not comprehensible to man.

41. What creatures of God are good only in a limited measure? The angels and good men.

42. How do their perfections compare with the perfections of God? As the dull light of a lamp to the brightness of the sun.

43. What else? As a drop of water to the immense ocean.

44. What does God Himself say of His infinite perfections? God says: "I am God, and there is no God beside, neither is there the like to me."

45. Who wished at one time to behold God and His perfections? Moses wished to look upon Him.

46. But what did God say to Him? "Thou canst not look upon my face, and live."

47. What did God mean by that? God wished to say that a mortal man cannot comprehend the nature and perfections of God.

48. Name some of the attributes or perfections of God. God is eternal and unchangeable, omnipresent, omniscient or all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful; He is infinitely holy and just, infinitely good, merciful, long-suffering; infinitely true and faithful.

49. How are these attributes of God divided? They may be divided, 1. Into those whereby God shows how He is in Himself, eternal, unchangeable, holy, omnipresent, etc. 2. Into those by which He shows Himself to be good, merciful, long-suffering, just, etc.

50. Which is the first Divine perfection? God is eternal.

51. What means God is eternal? God is eternal means: He is always, without beginning and without end.

52. Was there ever a time when God was not? No, there never was such a time.

53. When did God have a beginning? God never had a beginning.

54. What should we infer if God had had a beginning? That there must be a Being who had called God into existence.

55. And how must that being be compared to God? He must be more perfect than God.

56. In what else does the eternity of God consist? In this that He will have no end.

57. Can we form any idea of eternity? No, we cannot form any idea of eternity.

58. What comparison did I make use of? As well may we strive to tell where a ball begins and where it leaves off, as to say where the existence of God begins and where it ends.

59. How can we make to ourselves a feeble image of eternity? By going back as many thousands of years as there are leaves on the trees, drops in the ocean, and grains of sand upon the earth.

60. And what is this vast series of years compared to eternity? They are only a trifle.

61. Are there other creatures besides God which are eternal? No, besides God there are no other beings which are eternal.

62. How are the angels and the souls of men? They are only immortal.

63. Why are they not eternal, as they will have no end? Because they have had a beginning.

64. What do we call those creatures who had a beginning and will also have an end? We call them transitory and mortal.

65. Look at a plant, for instance! The gardener sows the seed, and from the seed comes a plant. It grows, becomes larger, and bears blossoms or flowers, these wither. Next year the plant bears blossoms again, and so on for several years. At last it dies, and the gardener pulls it up and throws it away. Thus is it with all creatures. They are perishable! What then is contrary to the eternal? The transitory is contrary to the eternal.

66. What does the Psalmist David say of the eternity of God? He says: "Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed; from eternity to eternity Thou art God." (Ps. lxxxix. 2.)

67. If God then is from all eternity, has no change taken place in Him in so many years? No, no change has taken place in Him.

68. Why not? Because God is unchangeable.

69. What means God is unchangeable? God is unchangeable means that He remains eternally the same, without any change either in Himself or in His decrees.

70. What is contrary to unchangeable? Changeable is contrary to unchangeable.

71. What things are changeable? All those things are changeable which in their nature, in their constituent parts and characteristics, are subject to alteration.

72. Mention something that is very changeable? The weather.

73. Anything else? Mankind.

74. How do men change? They are now good, now bad, now friend, now enemy.

75. Who is it that never changes and never can? God cannot change.

76. In what respect is God unchangeable? 1. In Himself, and 2. In His decrees.

77. What means: God is unchangeable in Himself? God is unchangeable in Himself means: God remains as perfect at one time as at another.

78. Explain this more exactly? God remains at one time as almighty, as good, as omnipresent, as all-knowing, as holy and just, as long-suffering and merciful as He does at another time.

79. God therefore can neither add to, or diminish His perfections. What means God is unchangeable in His decrees? God is unchangeable in His decrees means that, what God has once decided remains decided upon for all eternity.

80. From what passage of Holy Scripture can you prove this? From the verse: "My counsel shall stand, and all my will shall be done."

81. What ought we to do, since God is eternal and unchangeable? We ought to serve and love Him for ever and ever, and not place our trust in transitory things.

82. Name some of these transitory things? Riches, ability, beauty, high offices, the favor of man, etc.

83. Why ought we not place our confidence in these transitory things? Because they cannot always help us.

84. But why should we put our trust in God? Because God can, and will help us.

85. Why can God always help us? Because He is omnipotent.

86. Why will God always help us? Because He is good and faithful.

87. You are sick, for instance. Your parents are rich and send for the best physicians. Can these doctors cure you if God does not help? No, the doctors cannot help me.

88. Or you are suddenly placed in danger of death. You have money; can you help yourself with it? No, I cannot help myself with it.

89. You call for your parents, relations and friends. But they do not hear you, because they are far away; can they help you? No, they cannot help me.

90. Who is near us, however, in every danger, and who has the power to help us always? The good God.

91. To what should the thought that God is eternal still further encourage us? It should encourage us to avoid sin.

92. Why ought we to avoid sin? Because God threatens the sinner with chastisement.

93. With what punishment does God threaten the sinner? With the punishment of hell.

94. Will God fulfill His threat against the sinner? Yes, God will fulfill His threat.

95. Why will He do so? Because God is faithful.

96. To what else should the thought of God's eternity and unchangeableness encourage us? It should encourage us to have confidence in God.

97. What has God resolved upon from all eternity? God has resolved upon that which is best for me.

98. Now if God has resolved from all eternity upon that which is best for you, would He ever send you anything that would not tend to your salvation? No, God would never send me anything that did not tend to my salvation.

99. This conviction then that God would only send that which is best for us, is called "confidence in God." We ought to take more care of our immortal soul than of our mortal body and temporal affairs.

100. But how do the greater part of men behave? They look after their body and temporal affairs, and in consequence forget to take care of their soul.

101. Which passage of Scripture applies to this? "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffers the loss of his own soul?"

Teacher. Remember this, dear children! and always take pains to collect treasures for yourselves which will not be consumed by rust and moth. All the pomp of this world will pass away, but the good that you do in this world will remain for all eternity.

IX.

God's Omnipresence And Omniscience.

Dear Children:—In to-day's religious instruction we come to the explanation of two perfections of God which are very closely united, namely God's omnipresence and omniscience. We will speak in the first place of God's omnipresence. What means: God is omnipresent? God is omnipresent means that He is everywhere: in Heaven, on earth, and in all places.

God therefore is in Heaven, on earth, over the earth, under the earth, in the church, in the school, in your houses, on the street, in the fields, in the forest, etc., and there is no place where God is not. Man can be in only one place at a time, never in two or more places at once. If, for instance, you are in school you cannot at the same time be in the street or in the house. If anyone wishes to go from one place to another, he must first of all leave the place where he is. But with God it is not so, He is everywhere at the same time. He is omnipresent. The Psalmist David says: "Where shall I go from thy spirit? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there, and if I descend into the abyss thou art also there." In the Acts of the Apostles, it is said: "God is not far from every-one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and are. (Acts xvii. 27, 28.) As God is everywhere He is consequently a witness, a beholder of that which takes place in all places, by day and night, privately and publicly.

If then a child does not behave well in church, if it talks, and laughs, if it is inattentive in school, idle and troublesome, if it is disobedient at home, rude, and unkind, God is a witness of it all.

Whoever imagines that he has done something in secret, of which no one knows, has deceived himself.

God's omniscience is most closely united to His omnipresence.

What means God is omniscient? God is omniscient means: He knows all things perfectly and from all eternity. He knows all things past, present, and future, even our most secret thoughts.

God knows all things perfectly: no error, or deception, or confusion is possible with Him. God knows the past, that means

everything that all men at all times and in all places ever thought, said or did, good or bad. God knows the present, that means: He knows what is being thought, said or done by all men, good or bad, at this very moment in all places. God knows the future means: He knows what will be thought, said, and done by all men good or bad, at all times and in all places.

Holy Scripture says: "God's eyes are far brighter than the sun, and look into the deepest abysses of men's hearts."

The meaning of this verse is: God beholds even the most hidden things and knows the secret thoughts and intentions in the hearts of men. God alone is omniscient. Certainly in the old law the Prophets foretold many important events long beforehand; but not of themselves, not by their own knowledge, but by God's inspiration and revelation. At the present time, too, there are many learned men who by persevering in diligent study have obtained a rich treasure of knowledge; but they do not know everything, they do not know it of themselves, their knowledge is very incomplete; it is limited to certain scientific subjects, or to certain countries, persons, and past historical events, but of the future they know nothing whatever. For this reason all human knowledge in comparison to the omniscience of God is like a drop of water compared to the vast ocean. How very limited man's knowledge is may be seen from the fact that he knows very little of the present, of that even which goes on in his vicinity. For instance, when man sleeps he does not know at all what takes place around him; as little does he know the thoughts of those who are in his presence. Of the future man does not even know what the next minute will bring, not to speak of the hours or the days. A man may believe that he can foretell something that will happen in the future; he is only conjecturing on human events which may happen or may not. When, for instance, the sky is covered with black clouds, we can suppose that it will soon rain. If a person leads a worldly and sensual life we can presume that he will fall sick and die prematurely. If a person squanders his income, we may suppose that he will come to beggary, and so on. But if a person claims to foretell the future from cards or from the hand he is a deceiver and presumer and commits grievous sin against God, who alone knows the future.

The omniscience of God is proved by history. Thus God knew the sin of our first parents in paradise; the intentions of Cain and

Abel in offering the first sacrifice, the hatred of Cain towards his brother Abel and the murder of the latter, the doubt of Sara at the promise of a son. Jesus knew that His friend Lazarus was dead; that Judas would betray Him, and Peter deny Him thrice. He knew the secret sins of the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and the secret thoughts of the Pharisee, to whom He said: "Why dost thou think evil in thy heart?"

God according to His perfections must be omniscient, for, if by virtue of His justice He is to punish the wicked and reward the good, it is absolutely necessary that He should know what evil and what good man has done.

Omniscience is contrary to ignorance. We call those persons ignorant who know nothing, not even that which is most necessary.

To what should the thought of God's omnipresence and omniscience incite us?

1. It should incite us to keep from evil. In the same way as a thief is afraid of committing a robbery before his judge, and as a child fears to sin in the presence of its parents or other persons, so should we in a greater degree fear to sin before the eyes of our omnipresent God, of our just judge. Thus were the Egyptian Joseph and the chaste Susanna preserved from a great sin by the remembrance of God's omnipresence and omniscience. Tobias gave this exhortation to his son: "My son! all the days of thy life have God in thy heart, and avoid consenting to a sin!" The Emperor Basilius gave his son the advice to remember during every action that God was his spectator and witness.

2. The thought of God's omnipresence and omniscience should encourage us to do good even in secret. Persons who do good in secret resemble the violet. This little flower blooms only in secret, under hedges and bushes, and yet it sends forth its perfume all around. We also should strive to do good quietly and hiddenly and always remember that God, the omnipresent and omniscient, knows all things. We must not do as the Pharisees did, who did good in public, only to be seen and praised by man. Princess Elizabeth of Thuringia was a model of virtue in secret; she went into the huts of the poor at night to take them an alms. If everyone cannot be a prince or princess, still the opportunity is given to everybody to do good quietly and in secret. Do not let these opportunities pass by unused. God, who sees in secret, will one day reward them publicly.

3. The thought of God's omnipresence and omniscience consoles us in difficulties and troubles. When we, though innocent, are hurt, when persons are unkind and persecute us, the thought that God is omniscient should give us courage and consolation. The pious sufferer Job, abandoned by his wife and accused of sins by his friends, said: "Behold my witness is in heaven, and He that knoweth my conscience is on high." (Job xvi. 20.) King David said: "Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for Thou art with me." (Ps. xxii. 4.) As St. Chrysostom was about to be exiled by the Empress Eudoxia, he said: "You may send me where you will out into the world, I shall find God everywhere"! We will continue the remaining attributes or perfections of God in our next instruction, and we will now repeat to-day's lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of which perfections of God have we spoken to-day? Of the omnipresence and omniscience of God.

2. What means God is omnipresent? God is omnipresent means that He is everywhere; in heaven, on earth, and in all places.

3. Name some places where God is? God is in Heaven, on earth, over the earth, under the earth, in church, in school, in the houses, on the street, in the fields, and in the forest.

4. Is there, then, a place where God is not? No, there is no place where God is not.

5. Is man also present everywhere? No, man is not omnipresent.

6. In how many places can a man be at one time? Man can only be in one place at a time.

7. If he wishes to go from one place to another what must he do first of all? He must leave the first place.

8. Is it the same with God? No, God is at the same time in every place.

9. Where are you now? I am in school.

10. Are you at the same time at home or in the street? No, I am only in school.

11. Who is, however, at the same time in all places? God is at the same time everywhere.

12. What do we say of Him, therefore? We say he is omnipresent.

13. What does the Psalmist say of God's omnipresence? He says: "Where shall I go from thy face? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there, and if I descend into the abyss, thou art there also."

14. What is said in the Acts of the omnipresence of God? "God is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and are." (Acts xvii. 27, 28.)

15. Where is that which is not far? What is not far, is near us.

16. What then is the meaning of this verse? That God is near to every one of us.

17. If God is everywhere, what is the consequence? The consequence is that God is a witness of all that happens secretly and publicly.

18. Which attribute of God's is most intimately connected with His omnipresence? The omniscience of God.

19. What means: God is omniscient? God is omniscient means that He knows all things perfectly from all eternity. He knows all things past, present, and to come, even our most secret thoughts.

20. What, then, does God know? God knows everything, the present, etc.

21. How does God know everything? Perfectly and from all eternity.

22. What means God knows everything perfectly? It means: With God there is no error, and no deception.

23. What means God knows the past? It means: God knows whatever all men in all places have ever thought, said or done good or bad.

24. What means God knows the present? God knows now, at this moment, what is being thought, said and done, good or bad, by all men in all places.

25. What means God knows the future? It means: God knows what at all times and in all places will be thought, said or done good or bad by all men.

26. How does Holy Scripture express itself with regard to God's omniscience? It says: The eyes of the Lord are far brighter than the sun, and look into the deepest abysses of men's hearts.

27. What means this expression "God's eyes are far brighter than the sun"? It means that nothing can be hidden from God's eyes; that He sees and knows everything.

28. What are "the abysses of men's hearts"? They are the most secret thoughts and intentions of the hearts of men.

29. Who else besides God is omniscient? No one is omniscient besides God.

30. In the Old Law, however, many of the prophets have foretold important events centuries beforehand; how was this possible? It was possible through the inspiration and revelation of God.

31. In these days even there are many learned men; what difference is there between their knowledge and God's omniscience? 1. They do not know everything. 2. Their knowledge is a gift from God.

32. How far is the knowledge of learned men limited? Either to a few subjects, or to certain persons, and to past historical events.

33. And whence do they know this? From books which they have studied.

34. Who has given them the intellectual ability to study? God has given them this.

35. How is the knowledge of all men compared to the omniscience of God? It is like comparing a drop of water to the boundless ocean.

36. What does man know, for instance, of the present? Man hardly knows what is taking place around him.

37. In what condition does he not even know that? While he is asleep or unconscious.

38. What does man know of the thoughts of others? Man knows nothing of the thoughts of others.

39. What does man know of the future? Man knows nothing of the future.

40. Can you tell me what is going to happen in the next hour or the next moment? No, I cannot tell you.

41. Can I tell you? No, you cannot tell me.

42. What man can tell it? No man can tell it.

43. Why not? Because only God, who is omniscient, knows the future.

44. But there are persons who foretell man's future from the cards or the hand? (Gypsies.) They are deceivers and bad persons.

45. Can we not conjecture the future? Yes, we can do that.

46. If, for instance, the sky is threatening, what can we presume? That it will soon rain.

47. What can we presume about a spendthrift? That he will squander his fortune and come to beggary.

48. What can we conjecture of a man who leads a disorderly life? That he will be sick and miserable and die prematurely.

49. But can we foretell all this with certainty? No, we cannot do that.

50. In what way can you prove to me that God is omniscient? From Holy Scripture.

51. What did God know, for instance, about our first parents? That they had sinned in paradise.

52. What did God know about Cain and Abel? He knew their intentions at the first sacrifice.

53. What did God know about Sara? That she doubted the promise of a son.

54. What did Jesus know concerning His friend Lazarus? Jesus knew that Lazarus was dead.

55. What did Jesus know of the Samaritan woman of Jacob's well? Jesus knew her secret sins.

56. What did Jesus know about the Pharisees? He knew the secret thoughts of their hearts.

57. What did Jesus know about Judas and Peter? Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him, and that Peter would deny Him thrice.

58. What did Jesus know about the city of Jerusalem? That not one stone of it would remain upon another.

59. Why must God be omniscient? Because God in virtue of His justice must reward the good, and punish the wicked.

60. What is contrary to omniscience? Ignorance is contrary to omniscience.

61. When do we call a person ignorant? When he knows nothing, or not even that which is most necessary to know.

62. To what should the thought of God's omnipresence and omniscience incite us? It should incite us to avoid evil.

63. Can you name two persons in sacred history who were held back from committing sin by the thought of God's omniscience? The Egyptian Joseph and the chaste Susanna.

64. What exhortation did Tobias give his son in regard to the remembrance of God's omniscience? Tobias said: "My son, have God in thy heart all the days of thy life and take care not to give consent to sin."

65. What advice did the Emperor Basilius give to his son Leo? He advised him to remember in all his actions that God was his witness and spectator.

66. To what does the thought of God's omnipresence and omniscience incite us? It encourages us to do good even in secret.

67. What do those persons resemble who do good in secret? They r semble the violet.

68. Why do they resemble the violet? Because this little flower bloom in secret, but sends forth its perfume all around.

69. When do you, too, resemble the violet? When we endeavor to d good quietly and secretly.

70. What princess did I mention who did so much good in secret Princess Elizabeth of Thuringia.

71. What did I tell you about her? That she went into the huts of th poor at night to take alms to them.

72. What were those men called who in the time of Jesus only did goo so as to be seen and praised by men? They were called Pharisees.

73. Of what value in the sight of God is that good which men do s as to be seen and praised by others? It is of no value in the sight of Go

74. To what else should the remembrance of God's omnipresence an omniscience encourage us? It should give us courage and consolation all difficulties and troubles.

75. Who has given us a beautiful example of this? The pious suffer Job.

76. When all his relations had forsaken him, and his friends had eve accused him of sin, what did he say? "Behold my witness is in heaven, an He that knoweth my conscience is on high." (Job xvi. 20.)

77. What answer did St. Chrysostom make when the Empress Eudox wanted to exile him? He said: "Thou canst send me out into the worl wherever thou willest, I shall find God everywhere."

78. What did he mean by this? He meant that the thought of God omnipresence and omniscience would be his consolation in every trouble.

We will now conclude the religious instruction for to-day, an I exhort you all once more most urgently, in everything that yo do to think of God's omnipresence and omniscience. What mor exalted or inspiring thought can there be than that of being a ways in the vicinity of God, and, as it were, feeling His ver breath. What an inspiring thought that by God's omnipresenc every house, every room, every part of the field, forest, an earth is a sacred place, a temple, a dwelling place of God!

Never forget, then, for a moment the nearness of God; th vicinity of your omnipresent and omniscient, your holy and stri judge. This thought will keep you from all sin, encourage yo to do good, console you in sufferings and afflictions, and thu help you to win your eternal salvation.

X.

Of the Veneration and Invocation of the Saints.

Dear Children:—Following the course of the Catechism we come to-day to the doctrine of the "Veneration and Invocation of Saints." Above all things it is necessary that we should know the difference between angels and saints, for many children take the saints for angels and the angels for saints. The angels were created by God as blessed spirits, but the saints were once human beings, like ourselves. They had to combat temptations from within and without, as we do, and as a reward for their virtues and constancy they have been received into heaven.

The Catechism now asks: "What does the Catholic Church teach us of the veneration and invocation of saints?"

The answer says: "She teaches that it is right and salutary to venerate the saints and to invoke them." It is not wrong, therefore, to honor and invoke the saints, it is even very wholesome for us to do so. The veneration of the saints, indeed, is not made a duty by the commandments, but it belongs to the Ninth Article of the creed, which says: "I believe in the communion of saints."

In the explanation of this article we heard that there is a militant, a suffering and a triumphant part of the Church; that to the last belong the saints in heaven; that they pray to God for us, and that they desire nothing more fervently than that we should one day be eternally united with God in His glory as they are. The belief in the intercession of the saints between God and man is most consoling to human unworthiness and helplessness. I will endeavor to explain this to you by some examples from life. A child knows that his father is going to a town of which he has often heard a great deal. Now, although the father is devoted to the child, still he is very strict, and the child does not care to tell his father he would like to go with him. But the child knows what to do. Between him and the strict father stands the gentle, pleading mother, and to her the child turns, because he knows that the father will not refuse the mother's request. So the child is allowed to accompany his father.

The Council at Trent makes it binding upon bishops and priests of the Catholic Church to support the faithful in the belief in the

invocation and intercession of the saints, the veneration of their relics and statues. The Church takes her doctrine from Holy Scripture, from Tradition, and from reason itself.

In the Old Testament God lets the Prophet Jeremias say: "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me (and interceded) I should still have no heart for this people."

The reality and the powerfulness of the intercession of the saints is acknowledged also by the Holy Fathers Origen, Cyprian, Anthony and Ephraim.

But reason also tells us that the saints who ever upon this earth prayed so fervently for their fellow-men, interceded for us likewise in heaven, where they behold the Majesty of God face to face, and see more clearly the dangers to which we are exposed. Besides, God Himself has honored the saints and rewarded their merits, their virtues, their piety, and their spirit of penance, by receiving them into heaven. Why, then, should we not venerate those whom God Himself honors? Christian antiquity bestowed a religious veneration upon the Blessed Virgin, the holy Apostles and Martyrs, etc.; celebrated festivals, sang hymns and songs, accepted many names of saints in the Canon of the Mass, offered the Holy Sacrifice especially in their honor, erected churches, and altars in remembrance of them, and all this to venerate them and to honor God in them, to edify the faithful and encourage them to imitate their examples of virtue.

The Council of Nice, held in the year 787, speaks thus on the veneration of saints: "Whosoever does not confess that all the saints from the beginning until now are worthy of veneration shall be excommunicated."

The saints are superior works and creatures of God, living members of Christ, vessels of the Holy Ghost, and are accordingly worthy objects of our veneration. And if it is right to honor a man on account of his superiority and virtues, why is it not more reasonable to honor those who have received the reward of their virtue, the crown of justice, from the hands of God Himself?

Even that apostate Martin Luther, in a letter to the community of Erfurt (1522) allows veneration of the saints by writing: "Although it is not necessary to honor the saints, I do not condemn those who still honor them."

"What difference is there between the honor which we render to God and that which we give to the saints?"

1. We adore God alone, *i.e.*, we honor Him alone as the Supreme

Lord and the author of all good; but we honor the saints only as His faithful servants and friends.

2. We honor God for His own sake, but the saints on account of the gifts and talents which God has given them.

We offer to God the most profound reverence and boundless homage. The saints also do the same in heaven; in a word: we render to God supreme worship as our Creator, but only secondary honor to the saints.

As upon earth we give a higher honor to the President than we do to the other state officials, so do we honor the saints as friends of God, but not in the same measure as God. Furthermore, God's perfections are in Himself; but we honor the saints for the perfections which they have received from God. When we honor the saints, therefore, we honor God Himself, who gave them His grace to enable them to lead a virtuous life.

"What should be our principal care in honoring the saints?" "To become like them by imitating their virtues." That we may imitate the virtues of the saints it is necessary that we should know them. We learn to know the virtues of the saints by the stories of their lives, which are contained in the "Lives of the Saints." This book ought to be found in every Christian family, for it is an inexhaustible treasure of grace. In the long winter evenings and on Sunday afternoons there is no more beautiful or better entertainment than the reading of the "Lives of the Saints."

We find herein two things, namely, 1. That there are saints who were formerly sinners, as, for instance, St. Mary Magdalene, the holy Apostle Paul, and there are saints who from their youth lived in a state of holiness and justice; for instance, St. Aloysius, the Patron Saint of youth. By reading the lives of the saints, we shall find that there is no state of life which has not had its saint. St. Wendelinus was a shepherd, St. Joseph a carpenter. Many of the saints were hermits, priests, abbots, bishops and popes, others again were kings, emperors or queens and empresses, as, for instance, St. Canute, St. Cunigunde, St. Casimir, St. Matilda, St. Helen, St. Louis, King of France; St. Edward, King of England, and numerous others. We see, therefore, that we can be holy and imitate the saints in every walk of life. Every child and grown person should know well the life and virtues of his patron saint. The Church's exhortation to imitate the saints must not, however, be misunderstood. We are not expected to perform such astonishing

works of penance and mortification as the saints did. But we are required to love God above all things, and to be ready at all times to make any sacrifice for His sake. It is not necessary for us to retire into a wilderness or desert, but it is sufficient to avoid the tumult of the world, sensual pleasures and enjoyments which would lead us to sin. It is not necessary that we should, like St. John the Baptist in the desert, subsist on locusts and wild honey, but we should shun an extravagant and sinful excess in living which causes us to forget the poor.

It is not necessary that we should force ourselves to a perpetual silence, still we should bridle our tongue, say only that which is necessary and not indulge ourselves in idle gossip, calumny, detraction, and tale-bearing. It is not necessary that we should clothe ourselves in a hair shirt, but we should not dress above our station, or be a slave to fashionable dressing.

It is not necessary that we should scourge ourselves, but we should learn to hold our sensual desires and inclinations in check. We are not required to give away all our temporal goods and to live in direst poverty, but we should not allow our hearts to cling to money and thereby forget God and eternity.

"What difference is there between the prayers which we say to God and those which we say to the saints?"

"We pray to God that He may help us through His omnipotence; but to the saints that they may assist us through their intercession with God."

As there is a great difference between the honor which we pay to God and that which we render to the saints, so also is there a great difference between the prayers which we say to God and to the saints. By reason of His omnipotence God Himself can help us in all our necessities and concerns; but the saints cannot do this, because they are not omnipotent. They can, indeed, intercede for us with God; as the saints are friends of God, their intercession is very powerful. In that prayer in which all the saints of heaven are invoked, the "Litany of the Saints," it always says: "Pray for us." It never says: "Save us!" Whoever believes that the saints could assist us by their own power is guilty of sin.

"Whom should we especially venerate and invoke above all the angels and saints?"

"The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God."

Mary deserves our veneration and esteem above all the angels and

saints, for of all the daughters of Eve she is the chosen daughter of the heavenly Father, the chaste Bride of the Holy Ghost, the Virginal Mother of the Divine Son, and the Queen of Heaven. She is the only one of all the children of men who was conceived without stain of sin, she who is full of grace and blessed amongst women. She surpasses all the angels and saints in grace and sanctity, and St. Augustine says of her: "Her dignity is so great because she is the Mother of God, that she not only surpasses the dignity of mankind, but that of the angels also."

St. Jerome says: "Just as in comparison with God no one is good, so there are no saints like Mary in perfection. For this reason the Catholic Church venerates her above all the saints."

Justly, therefore, does the Church call her a spiritual vessel, *i.e.*, a vessel of all virtues, a mirror of justice. With perfect right then have entire countries, large cities, and invidual communities chosen her as their Patroness, and placed themselves in an especial manner under her protection.

A special day of the week, namely, Saturday, has, too, been devoted to the honor of the Blessed Virgin, and of the whole year, the month of May in particular. This month is the month of blossoms and flowers, and for this reason it is set aside to praise and extol the loveliest flower of God's garden.

"Ought we to reverence the pictures of Christ and the saints?"

Most decidedly; for if a child honors the portrait of his parents, we ought far more to hold in veneration the pictures of Christ and His saints.

The veneration of holy pictures originated in the fourth century. Before that time the exhibition and veneration of holy pictures was not so common in the Catholic Church, because it was feared it might lead the recently converted heathens back to idolatry.

When, through the Emperor Constantine the Great, Christianity had obtained a firmer foundation and the danger of misconception in the veneration of pictures was no longer to be feared, this veneration of pictures and relics became more common. Constantine was one of the first to give the example, for he caused the holy cross to be honored above all things and placed everywhere. He placed in the churches which he had erected costly statues of gold and silver representing Christ and the Apostles. The veneration of holy pictures had lasted undisturbed for four centuries, when the Emperor Leo III. issued an edict in the year 730 ordering the

abolition of pictures throughout the kingdom. The monks were strictly forbidden to make them, and under pain of death, the law commanded that all pictures be removed from the churches, public places, and dwelling houses, and to break and burn them up as idols. Pope Gregory II. opposed this most resolutely, but in vain. The attack upon the pictures continued. In Constantinople a riot took place, and the people killed several stone masons who were sent to destroy the statues. In Rome, too, the people were worked up to a frenzy and did the same to the Emperor's statuary as the Emperor had done with the statues of Christ and His saints; they were thrown down, and dragged through the mire of the streets. When the Emperor Leo III. died, in 741, he was succeeded by his son, Constantine V., who not only walked in his father's footsteps, but carried his hatred of statues still further. The monks, who zealously opposed his action, were sewed into sacks and thrown into the sea, or dragged through the streets, and scourged to death. His successor, Leo IV., also continued the destruction of images, until finally, after his death, under the Empress Irene, the war against the statues ceased, and the General Council of Nice, in the year 787, gave the decision that the veneration of holy pictures was not sinful, for the honor was not paid to the picture itself, but to those whom it represented. If, then, there is no harm in a child venerating the picture of his parents, neither is there harm in venerating the pictures of Christ and His saints. What Christian can pass by a picture with indifference which represents the Saviour carrying His cross? Certainly every Christian knows well that an image graven in stone, or carved in wood, or painted upon canvas or paper, cannot hear his petition nor help him. Neither does a Christian kneel before an image of the Blessed Virgin or some other saint, to worship it, but crucifixes and statues remind us of those whom they represent—Christ and the saints. It is, therefore, not superstition or idol worship, if we kneel before a statue of a saint to pray. The words of the first commandment, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," do not refer to the veneration of holy images, but to idolatry. For what purpose should we make use of the pictures of Christ and the saints?

1. For the decoration of our churches. If we were to take the pictures and statues out of a well decorated church, we should see how empty and bare the walls would appear.

2. To animate our piety. They exhort us as it were and invite us

to imitate the saints and to live as they did, that we may one day be glorified as they are.

3. The sight of holy pictures produces in young children especially, the first religious impressions.

We venerate not only the pictures of the saints but also their relics or remains.

Relics are parts of a saint's body, as fingers, bones, etc., or certain things which they used during their lifetime. For this reason in the early ages of Christianity it was the custom to build churches and chapels over the tombs of the holy martyrs. But as later, churches and chapels had to be built in places where there were no graves of holy martyrs, there were at least relics of the saints placed in the altar stone of these churches and chapels. The holy sacrifice of the Mass cannot be offered up upon an altar which does not contain these relics.

"Why then do we venerate the remains or relics of saints?"

1. Because their bodies were temples of the Holy Ghost and

2. Because God frequently works miracles through them.

When some one dies who in life was dear to us, we keep their clothes, we take a lock of their hair or we preserve the things which they used daily as a precious souvenir which we would not part with for anything in the world. Why should not the relics of the saints who their whole life long were Temples of the Holy Ghost be dear and precious to us? Even in the old law Moses venerated the bones of the Egyptian Joseph, by taking them with him into the Promised Land. Furthermore it is proved in the Bible as well as in the history of the Church, that God has worked miracles through them.

By touching the bones of Eliseus a dead man came to life again. (IV. Kings xiii. 21.)

By touching the hem of a garment which Christ wore a sick woman was restored to health. (Matth. ix. 20.) Through the handkerchief and girdle of St. Paul the sick and those possessed by the devil were healed. (Acts xix. 12.) St. Augustine, the holy Doctor of the Church, relates that miracles were worked through the bodies of the martyrs Gervais and Protase. ("Confessions of St. Augustine.") When, in the year 1129, Paris, the capital of France, was visited by a terrible pestilence, and no relief came after all the penitential works and prayers, a procession was made, in which the relics of St. Genevieve were carried. Her intercession was implored, and the city was delivered from the terrible scourge.

We will now repeat the lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the veneration and invocation of saints.

2. First of all tell me what difference there is between angels and saints? The angels are originally blessed spirits created by God; but the saints were once men on earth as we are.

3. What does the Catholic Church teach us of the veneration and invocation of saints? She teaches that it is right and salutary to honor the saints and invoke them.

4. Is the veneration of the saints commanded and made an explicit, indispensable duty? No, the veneration of saints is not an explicit commandment.

5. What does the Catholic Church teach? She teaches that it is right, allowable, and salutary to honor the saints and invoke them.

6. To which article of the creed does the veneration of saints belong? To the Ninth Article.

7. What does it say? "I believe in the communion of saints."

8. Who belongs to this communion of saints? 1. The blessed in heaven; 2. the Christians upon earth; 3. the souls in purgatory.

9. What is this communion called? It is called also: 1. The triumphant; 2. the militant; 3. the suffering Church.

10. What do we believe about the saints in heaven? We believe that they pray to God for us.

11. What ought we to do also for this reason? We ought to invoke their intercession.

12. By what example did I endeavor to explain to you the invocation of the saints? When a boy wishes a favor from his father, he turns to his mother to intercede for him.

13. Of what should we be careful in honoring the saints? That we do not render them honors due to God.

14. Why not? The saints are only friends of God.

15. What should we observe in praying to the saints? We should remember that the saints cannot help us, but only pray to God for us.

16. Why cannot they help us themselves? Because they are not omnipotent.

17. What is that prayer called in which we invoke the intercession of the saints? The "Litany of the Saints."

18. When therein one or several of the saints are invoked, what answer do the people make? "Pray for us."

19. What do they never say? They never say "Save us!"

20. From whom did the saints receive their pre-eminence? They received it from God.

21. When did God obtain His perfections? God has them in Himself.

22. Whom then do we honor in the saints? We honor God.

23. By what example did I explain this to you? As we honor the President we honor his officials also.

24. To which of these does the highest honor belong? The highest honor belongs to the President.

25. Why? Because his dignity is the highest.

26. How do we best venerate the saints? By imitating their virtues.

27. What is understood by imitating their virtues? We should live as piously and as virtuously as they did.

28. What then is necessary if we wish to imitate the virtues of the saints? We ought to know by what virtues they distinguished themselves.

29. In what book do we learn to know the virtues of the saints? From the "Lives of the Saints."

30. What should be done every day or at least every Sunday and Feast day in a Christian family? A portion of the "Lives of the Saints" should be read aloud.

31. What is your name? My name is John.

32. Who is your Patron Saint? Saint John.

33. Which St. John? St. John Nepomucen.

34. Tell we now what you know about him? He was confessor to the Queen of Bohemia at Prague. The King, her husband, suggested to him that he should reveal to him what the Queen had confessed. St. John, however, would not condescend to break the seal of confession. Out of revenge the King had him thrown into the river Moldau.

35. What virtues of St. John can you now imitate? Silence, and the faithful accomplishment of the duties of my state of life.

36. What is your name? My name is Joseph.

37. Who is your Patron? St. Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus.

38. Which of St. Joseph's virtues can you imitate? His piety.

39. What is your name? My name is Anne.

40. Who was St. Anne? She was the mother of the Blessed Virgin.

41. When we read the lives of the saints what difference do we note there? That there were saints who formerly were great sinners and who with God's grace amended later, and there were saints who from their youth had lived in a state of holiness and justice.

42. Can you name some saints who were first great sinners, before they became great saints? St. Mary Magdalene, St. Paul the Apostle.

43. Can you mention some saints who from their youth lived in a state of holiness and justice? St. Aloysius, etc.

44. Now when we are exhorted to imitate the saints, is it meant to imitate them perfectly? No, it is not meant perfectly.

45. We know, for instance, that St. John the Baptist lived in the wilderness upon locusts and wild honey. Does it follow that we, too, should live upon locusts? No, it is not expected of us.

46. How then should we imitate them? By moderation in eating and drinking.

47. Many of the saints retired into solitude and wore a hair shirt. Is it necessary for you to do the same? No, it is not necessary.

48. But how can and ought we to imitate them? By not dressing above our station, not being vain, and hurting modesty.

49. Most of the saints lived in poverty and want; is this expected of us? No, it is not.

50. How should we imitate them then? By not setting our hearts too much upon temporal things, thereby forgetting God and the salvation of our soul.

51. What is the difference between the prayers which we offer to God and those which we offer to the saints? We pray to God that He may help us by His omnipotence; but to the saints that they may help us by their intercession for us with God.

52. As the saints are friends of God, is their intercession powerful? It is efficacious and powerful.

53. Upon what conditions only will God grant our prayers and the intercession of the saints? If that for which we ask is good for us.

54. Now we have heard that the saints are not omniscient. Do the saints know, then, when or for what we invoke their intercession? Yes, they know this, but not by reason of omniscience.

55. How then do they know it? By the communication or revelation of God. (God revealed to the just even in this world hidden and future events; for instance, to Samuel Saul's thoughts, to Eliseus the behavior of his servant Giezi, to Peter the imposition of Ananias and Saphira).

56. Whom should we especially honor and invoke above all the angels and saints? The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

57. Why does a higher honor, a greater veneration belong to her? Because she was honored by God Himself, and exalted above all angels and men.

58. In what way was she exalted above all angels and men? By being chosen by God to be the Mother of His only begotten Son.

59. For what have many countries, cities, and communities chosen the Blessed Virgin? They have chosen her as their Patron.

60. Which day of the week is specially dedicated to the veneration of Mary? Saturday.

61. And which month of the year? The month of May.

62. What is this month called? It is called the month of blossoms.

63. Why is this month especially devoted to the honor of Mary? Because Mary is, as it were, the loveliest flower in God's garden.

64. Should we also hold the pictures of Christ and the saints in veneration? Most certainly, for if a child reverences the portrait of his parents, we ought so much more to hold the pictures of Christ and His saints in veneration.

65. In what period did the veneration of holy pictures originate? In the first quarter of the fourth century.

66. Why was the veneration of holy pictures not introduced earlier in the Catholic Church? So as not to give an occasion to the newly converted heathens to return to idolatry.

67. Through whom did the veneration of holy pictures become more general? Through the Emperor Constantine the Great.

68. What did I tell you concerning him? That above all things he caused the sign of the cross to be respected.

69. What else did he do? He dedicated costly statues of gold and silver representing Christ and the Apostles in the churches which he had erected.

70. How long did the veneration of holy pictures remain undisturbed? For about 400 years.

71. What happened then? The holy pictures were violently attacked.

72. What can you tell me about this? (The pupil recites what he has learned.)

73. In whose reign did this violent attack take place? In the reign of the Emperor Leo III.

74. What object did he attain by this attack? He caused the destruction of all holy pictures and he did away with the veneration of the same.

75. How long did this attack last? About 50 years.

76. What did the Council of Nice declare about the veneration of holy pictures? It declared that the veneration of holy pictures was not sinful.

77. Why not? Because the veneration is not of the picture, but of those whom it represents.

78. What then should we not believe? We must not believe that the pictures can hear or help us.

79. Is it no sin to kneel down before a statue of the Blessed Virgin or the saints? No, it is no sin.

80. Why is it no sin? Because we do not kneel down to worship the picture.

81. It says, however, in the first commandment, "Thou shalt not worship any graven image"? This command of God refers to idols and not to holy images.

82. What natural use do the pictures of Christ and the saints serve? They serve to adorn our churches and homes.

83. Of what further, or spiritual, use are they? They animate our pious feelings.

84. What are you reminded of every time you look at a crucifix? I am reminded of Christ's death upon the cross.

85. Of what else? Of our redemption.

86. To what should the pictures of other saints exhort us? They should exhort us to imitate the life of the saint.

87. What do we venerate of the saints besides their images? We also venerate their relics.

88. What are relics of the saints? Parts of the body of the saints, as his fingers, bones, or those things which he used during his lifetime.

89. Where are the relics of saints absolutely necessary? In the altars of Catholic churches.

90. What did I teach you in reference to this? That the holy sacrifice of the Mass cannot be offered upon an altar where there are no relics of the saints.

91. Why do we venerate the relics of the saints? 1. Because their bodies were temples of the Holy Ghost; 2. because God frequently works miracles through them.

92. What then is the first reason? Because their bodies were temples (abodes) of the Holy Ghost.

93. Why were their bodies temples of the Holy Ghost? Because God dwelt in them, and because they devoted their bodies to works of virtue and justice.

94. What is the second reason? Because God frequently works miracles through them.

95. What miracle can you relate from the Old Testament? The miracle related of a dead man who was touched with the bones of Eliseus, and came back to life again.

96. A few examples from the New Testament? St. Paul placed his handkerchief and girdle upon the sick, who were thereupon healed.

97. One other example? A sick woman touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was cured.

98. One more example? St. Augustine relates that miracles were wrought through the bodies of the holy martyrs, Gervais and Protase.

99. What other miracle did I tell you about? When the plague raged in Paris, in the year 1129, the inhabitants had recourse to St. Genevieve, whose relics were carried in solemn procession, and the city was delivered from the scourge.

The moral which you should take to heart, is what I have already told you during this instruction: Honor devoutly the saints, particularly the Most Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, and your patron saints. Read diligently the life story of the saints and imitate their examples faithfully!

XI.

Of God's Wisdom and Omnipotence

Dear Children:—In the explanation of the Divine Attributes or Perfections, we come to-day to the doctrine of the wisdom of God and His omnipotence. In the last lesson we heard that God is all-wise and knows everything; He knows therefore what is best for everyone. This is then another of God's perfections—His wisdom. To the question: "What means: God is All-wise"? the catechism answers: "God is all-wise means that He knows how to dispose all things in the best manner, in order to attain His end."

We call those persons wise who in all they do have the best intentions and use the best means to attain their end. Now God being infinitely holy, can wish only that which is good, and on account of His wisdom He chooses the best means to attain that which He desires. We are led to a knowledge of God's wisdom: 1. By the consideration of the entire visible creation and all its arrangements. By visible creation is understood not only the earth with its creatures: men, animals, plants, stones, etc., but the whole universe, sun, moon and stars. You have of course seen the starry heavens at night? What you there looked upon as little stars, are all heavenly bodies like our earth, some larger, some smaller. A number of them which we call suns or fixed stars, are stationary, whilst others called planets are in perpetual motion. And yet it has never happened that amongst such a vast multitude of moving heavenly bodies, one has fallen against the other and injured it. Our earth too, upon which we live, is a planet. It revolves around itself in 24 hours and this causes day and night. Again, in a period of 365 days, it travels around the sun and this causes the four seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. If it was always day there would be no time for rest. If it was always Summer the earth would lose its fruitfulness and if it was always Winter the earth would not

bring forth anything and men would starve. If great heat was suddenly replaced by severe cold or vice-versa it would be very injurious to the lives and health of mankind. But the wisdom of God has arranged it in such a way, that in Spring it becomes gradually warmer, and in Autumn gradually colder.

God's wisdom reveals itself in the arrangement of our bodies.

Just observe your body, that wonderful structure, with which the most artistic work of man cannot be compared. Exteriorly you see the flesh, which is covered with skin. The body is not merely a lump of flesh, for in that case it would drop to pieces. It is supported by the bones. Through them it can hold itself erect; through them it can move and stand still. They give firmness to the body, as its exterior covering, flesh and skin, give it beauty and grace. Observe the beautiful exterior shape of your body! It is crowned by the head in which is placed almost all the organs of the senses. In front we see the smooth face, with its noble forehead and beneath this the movable eyes. In them is mirrored the invisible soul, which gives life to the body. The head rests upon the slender, flexible neck from which on either side slope the shoulders and the arms, which are finished off by the well made hands. For movement, the arms are furnished with many joints, which render them useful in thousands of works. What symmetry exists in all parts of the human body! How supple and how easily moved is every part of the whole! Observe the several organs of the senses! The eyes are placed high up in the head, so that man may look about him as far as possible. The wisdom of the Creator gave man two eyes, so that if he should lose one, he would still have one left. The senses of smell and taste in the nose and mouth, are near one another, so that man by the sense of smell can convince himself whether that which he eats will taste well; for whatever has a bad odor, has an unpleasant taste. The mouth is also the organ of speech, by which we express our thoughts to others. Our food which serves to nourish our body is taken into the mouth, to the stomach, after it has been first chewed by the teeth. And thus every part of the human body is a witness and a proof of the wisdom and omnipotence of God. As our bodies have been wisely arranged by God, so has every creature been wisely arranged by God. In spite of this there have been men who in their blindness have dared to find fault with created things, and I shall relate to you a very instructive story about a peasant who wanted to be more clever

than God Himself, and was corrected for it in a very striking manner.

This peasant was lying beneath the shade of an oak tree. Before him he saw a field in which a number of large pumpkins were growing and above his head, he noticed the little acorns hanging from the majestic oak.

"Ah," said the peasant, "that is wonderful; those large pumpkins grow in a field, and these little insignificant acorns upon an immense oak tree! If I had created the world, the acorns would grow in the fields, and the pumpkins on large trees."

The peasant fell asleep, and while he slept, an acorn dropped down from the tree upon his nose with such force that it bled. The peasant awoke, wiped the blood from his nose and said to himself: "If instead of an acorn, a pumpkin had fallen upon my nose, my whole head would have been smashed." Thereafter the peasant never thought of finding fault with God's works.

2. God's wisdom shows itself in history. How wonderfully and with what infinite wisdom God ruled the destiny of the Egyptian Joseph! His brothers had sought his ruin, and God's wisdom so arranged it that he became the Governor of Egypt. How miraculously God saved the life of Moses! God's wisdom ordained it that the king's daughter should walk by the banks of the river, that she should see the little basket, and order it to be fetched. God touched her heart, so that she took pity upon the boy, took him to the palace, and had him brought up at the royal court. How miraculously were the lives of Mordechai and the chaste Susanna saved! God makes use sometimes, in His infinite wisdom, of lowly and insignificant creatures to carry out His intentions for man's welfare. Of this I shall give you an example. A certain Prince was a great enemy of flies and spiders, and in his indignation he frequently asked why God should create such troublesome insects. Upon one occasion this Prince had to flee from his enemies. In his flight he came to a forest, where he lay down exhausted beneath a tree and fell fast asleep. One of the enemy's soldiers approached him with a drawn sword to kill him. At that very moment a fly stung the Prince so violently on the cheek, that he awoke. He drew his sword, and the enemy fled. Then he hid himself in a cave of the forest. A spider spun its web over night across the entrance to the cave. The following morning two of the enemy's soldiers who sought him, came to the mouth of the cave. The Prince overheard what they said to

one another. "Look, he can't have hidden himself in there," cried one. "No," replied the other, "he cannot have gone in there, else he would have broken the spider's web." They withdrew; a fly and a spider had saved the Prince's life.

The uses of many of God's creatures are not known to man, and hence he calls them vermin and weeds. Many persons have put the question: "What is the use of vermin and weeds?" Our understanding is too weak to answer this question. God's ways are not our ways, and God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Thus God sends man sickness, sterile years, destructive thunder storms, hail storms, floods, war, famine, infectious diseases amongst men and animals, plagues of various kinds. In all these visitations God has His wise intentions, and even though we do not at once understand it, everything serves for our good. When people are sick they send for the doctor, who orders medicines for them which often taste bitter and are very nauseous to take. Our soul likewise is in need of a physician to heal it. This doctor is God. The drugs which He uses to cure us are the tribulations He sends us, which not infrequently are very heavy. But as bitter drugs restore our bodily health, so do the afflictions which God sends us heal our soul.

Now that God may execute His wise purposes and decrees, He must also have power, He must be omnipotent, and thus we come again to a new attribute of God, His omnipotence. What means: "God is omnipotent"? God is omnipotent means that He can do anything, and has only to will, and the thing is done. The Holy Scripture says: "Nothing is impossible to God." The omnipotence of God is an article of faith. The first article of the Creed says: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." That God is omnipotent or almighty is proved:

1. By Creation. All the scientists of the whole earth are not capable of imitating the smallest object in the natural creation, for instance, a grain of sand, a blade of grass, etc., not even if you were to give them whatever they desired. God, however, called into existence and created everything that is, the vast universe with its millions upon millions of creatures, out of nothing. He said: "Let it be"! and it was.

2. By the preservation of the world. Man is not capable of creating anything, neither is he able to preserve that which is created. But God not only called the world into existence, He also preserves it. He makes the world to continue as long as it pleases

Him. Many thousands of years have already passed since God called the world into existence, and it is still as beautiful as if it existed only since yesterday.

3. By the wonders in Egypt and in the desert. When Pharaoh, King of Egypt, refused to let the Israelites leave, God sent great plagues upon Egypt, to force Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart. All the water was turned to blood, the fish died, and no one could drink any of it. A countless multitude of frogs filled the palace of the King, in all the rooms, beds, seats, houses, ovens and ponds. Then the bloody water crawled alive with snails, and man and beast were tormented by them. Thereupon a terrible cattle plague broke out all over Egypt. Camels, oxen, asses and sheep died in great numbers. Boils and swellings came out upon man and beast. Then God sent a thunderstorm the like of which had never been known in the memory of man. After this was added a cloud of locusts to eat up everything that was left after the storm. They were so numerous that they obscured the sun. At last an impenetrable darkness covered the land, which lasted for three days, during which people could not see one another, and no one could move from the place where he was. At last God sent an angel, who killed all the first born of the Egyptians in one night. God worked as great wonders in the desert as He had in Egypt. He gave the Israelites water from a rock and rained down bread and manna from heaven. By the power of God the three youths were preserved in the fiery furnace, and Elias was saved from starvation, a raven bringing him food every day. By God's omnipotence Daniel was saved from death in the lion's den.

To what should our belief in God's infinite power and infinite wisdom incite us?

1. It should incite us to place all our confidence in God. According to His infinite goodness God wills every good to His creatures, and in virtue of His omnipotence He possesses the means to carry out that which in His wisdom He has determined upon. This taken altogether incites us to an unlimited confidence in God. Holy Scripture says: "Put not your trust in the children of men, in whom there is no salvation. Blessed is he whose hope is in the Lord his God." (Ps. cxlv. 3, 5.)

2. When God sends us tribulations we should be resigned to His dispensations. A physician has many remedies at his service. He knows which are the remedies that, if properly administered, will

restore the patient to health. Thus God sends many afflictions upon mankind, which He is convinced in His wisdom will serve for their cure. Therefore the Psalmist David says: "Commit thy way to the Lord, and trust in Him, and He will do it." (Ps. xxxvi. 5.)

3. The thought of God's omnipotence and wisdom should keep us humble. How many persons are proud of their works, and what are they in comparison with those which God has created? And if men have produced really great things worthy of admiration, who gave them the powers of mind and body to enable them to do so? Everything that man is, he is, only by God's grace. All that he has is only a gift from God. These thoughts ought to keep us humble.

4. The thought of God's omnipotence should deter us from doing evil. What an awful crime it is for a sinner to resist His Father, His Creator, His Benefactor, yea the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth, and to say to Him as it were: "I know Thy laws, but I despise them. I know Thy commandments, but I will not keep them. I know Thy power, but I am not afraid of Thee." What a terrible thing it is to fall into the hands of this Almighty Judge who can punish us so terribly!

5. The thought of God's omnipotence should fortify us in the hour of death. Death is an awful thing. In greatest agony the soul separates itself from the body. The consciousness of the grave and corruption, of judgment and retribution causes the dying great anguish of mind. Who gives strength, then, to take the difficult path into eternity? Who will forgive us the sins which will accuse us before the tribunal of God? It is God, in whose paternal hands we leave all that is temporal, to pass through the portals of eternity. He it is who in His grace and mercy can remit our sins, and it is through God's omnipotence that we can enter into the abode of eternal peace.

We will now repeat this lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Which of God's attributes have we spoken of to-day? Of the wisdom and omnipotence of God.

2. What means: God is all-wise? God is all-wise means: "He knows how to dispose all things in the best manner, in order to attain His end."

3. Whom do we commonly call wise? He is commonly called wise who in everything that he does has a good purpose, and chooses the best means to attain his end.

4. Why do we call God all-wise? Because He has the best knowledge, and chooses the best means to attain that which is good.

5. What does David say concerning the wisdom of God? He says: "O depth of the riches, and wisdom, and science of God!"

6. What considerations lead us to the knowledge of God's wisdom? The consideration of Nature, the universe, and all created things.

7. What arrangements has God made whereby we can understand His wisdom? The alternations of day and night, and the four seasons.

8. If for instance it was always day, what would happen? There would be no time to rest.

9. What would happen if it was always night? If it was continually night we should have to do our work in the darkness.

10. What are the four seasons called which alternate with one another? Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.

11. What would happen if it was constantly winter? The earth would bring forth no more fruits, and we should starve.

12. What disadvantage would there be . it was always summer? The earth would have no rest, and would thereby lose its fruitfulness.

13. What would be the result if the change from cold to heat should take place suddenly? It would cause sickness.

14. What arrangement has God made in His wisdom that this should not happen? He has wisely arranged that it becomes warm or cold gradually.

15. Which are the seasons in which it gradually becomes warm or cold? Spring and Autumn.

16. Whence can we see still more the infinite wisdom of God? From the arrangement of the whole universe.

17. What is understood by the universe? We understand thereby all the heavenly bodies.

18. Name some of these heavenly bodies? The suns or fixed stars, the planets and comets.

19. When do we see these heavenly bodies? We see them mostly at night.

20. How do they appear to us? They appear to us like little stars or lights.

21. How large are many of them? Many of them are larger than our earth.

22. Why do they appear so small to us? They appear so small to us because they are a tremendous distance away from us.

23. By what means are the planets distinguishable from the rest of the heavenly bodies? They are distinguishable by being in continual motion.

24. In what way does this movement of the many thousands of heavenly bodies proceed? This motion proceeds in the greatest order.

25. Who has fixed the path of the stars? God.

26. Has it ever been known since Creation that two heavenly bodies have struck against each other? No, it has never happened.

27. What does this marvellous arrangement of the universe bear witness to? It bears witness to the wisdom of God.

28. From what else do we learn to know the wisdom of God? From the wonderful arrangement of the human body.

29. Where are your eyes placed, for instance? My eyes are placed in the head.

30. Why just near the top of the head? So that I can see the greatest possible distance.

31. How many eyes have you? I have two eyes.

32. Why has the Creator given you two eyes? So that I might still have one should I be so unfortunate as to lose the other.

33. How has God wisely protected the eyes? They lie in a deep cavity, and are protected by the eyelids.

34. What are the organs of smell and taste called? The nose and the mouth.

35. For what wise purpose has God placed these two organs of sense close together? So that by the smell we first examine what we are going to partake of, whether it will be good to the taste or not.

36. What wise arrangement has God made so that food has not to be swallowed whole? We have teeth in our mouth with which to chew our food.

37. Through what does the blood circulate in your body? Through the heart and the veins.

38. Which part of the human body cares for the nourishing and preserving of the body? The stomach.

39. What are the organs of breathing called? They are called the lungs.

40. How are the organs of the heart and lungs protected? By the cavity of the chest which is formed by the ribs.

41. You may observe whatever member of your body you like, and everywhere you will find the same wisdom. In what way do we still further see the wisdom of God? In any creature which God has created.

42. What has every creature either for the good of man or some other creature? Every creature has its usefulness.

43. What is the use of rain for instance? For the growth of plants.

44. What is the use of plants? For the food of animals.

45. For what are many animals useful? For the food of mankind.

46. Now are there not plants called weeds, and animals called vermin? We only call them so because we do not yet know their usefulness.

47. Is it permissible to find fault with God's works? No, it is not permissible, and sinful.

48. Can you give me the examples which I gave you a little while ago? (The pupils will relate them simply.)

49. Of what else does man not know the use, although it comes from God? Of the visitations, the sufferings and afflictions which God sends to men.

50. Name some of these visitations? Sickness, death, destructive thunderstorms, inundations, war, and famine.

51. What has God in all the visitations which He sends mankind? God has His wise decrees.

52. Do we know these decrees of God? No, we do not know them.

53. Of what should we be always convinced however? That God's wisdom rules all things for our good.

54. What comparison did I employ? That of a physician.

55. What does the physician order for his patient? He orders him wholesome remedies.

56. How do these medicines often taste? They taste bitter.

57. When the patient is well again what does he acknowledge? He acknowledges that they were for his good.

58. In what way do we see further that God is all-wise? From sacred history.

59. What examples did I give you from sacred history? The story of the Egyptian Joseph, of Moses and Aman.

60. How did God's wisdom reveal itself in the story of the Egyptian Joseph? His brothers sought his ruin, and God so ruled it that he became Governor of Egypt.

61. How does God's wisdom reveal itself in the story of Moses' life? Moses was doomed to die like all the Israelitish boys at that time. But God so conducted the footsteps of the King's daughter, that she found the child Moses in the basket of rushes. He touched her heart so that she took pity upon the boy, took him to the house, and had him brought up at the royal court.

62. How did God's wisdom reveal itself in Aman? He had had a scaffold built for Mordechai, and God so ruled it, that Aman himself died upon it.

63. We have heard, then, that God has the best intentions with all mankind. Now what is wanting to attain these intentions? God must therefore have the power also to attain His purposes.

64. Has God this power? Yes, God has this power.

65. Why has He this power? Because He is almighty or omnipotent.

66. What means: God is omnipotent? God is omnipotent means that: "He can do anything, and has only to will, and the thing is done."

67. In what way do we see that God is omnipotent? 1. By the creation of the world. 2. By the preservation of the world; and, 3. by miracles.

68. Why could God alone have created the world and not man? Because all the wisest men and all the artisans of the whole world together are not capable of creating or imitating the least thing that is in it.

69. Out of what did God make the whole world? Out of nothing. He said only: "Let it be!" and it was.

70. What does the Holy Scripture say of God's omnipotence? The Holy Scripture says: "Nothing is impossible to God."

71. In what way does God's omnipotence still further show itself? By the preservation of the world.

72. How long has God already preserved the world? Many thousands of years.

73. And how is the earth still? The earth i. still in all essentials as it was when God created it in the beginning.

74. How does God preserve the world? By His omnipotence.

75. If God so willed it how long could he preserve it by His omnipotence? He could preserve it forever.

76. Is this the case with those things made by man? No, with the things made by man it is not so.

77. How long do they last in spite of every human endeavor to preserve them? They last only for a time.

78. And when they have lasted for a time what happens then? Then they perish.

79. In what way is God's omnipotence still further proved? By miracles.

80. What miracles does the catechism mention? The wonders in Egypt and in the desert.

81. Can you tell me what miracles God worked in Egypt? Yes, I can name them.

82. Do so. (The pupil names them according to foregoing explanation.)

83. Name the wonders which God worked in the desert. He gave the Israelites water from a rock, and bread from heaven.

84. Can you mention any other miracles as a proof of God's omnipotence? By God's almighty power the three youths were preserved in the fiery furnace. Daniel was saved from death by a miracle in the lion's den. Elias was saved from starvation, a raven bringing him food every day.

85. To what should our belief in God's infinite power and infinite wisdom incite us? It should incite us to place all our confidence in God.

86. Why? Because God always can help us, desires to help us, and will help us.

87. Why can God always help us? Because He is almighty.

88. Why does God desire to help us? Because He is infinitely good.

89. Why will God always help us? Because He is infinitely faithful.

90. What does the Holy Scripture say concerning this? Holy Scripture says: "Put not your trust in the children of men, in whom there is no salvation. Blessed is he whose hope is in the Lord his God." (Ps. cxlv. 3-5.)

91. To what should our belief in God's wisdom and power still further incite us? It should incite us to be always resigned to His dispensations.

92. What is understood by dispensations? The sufferings which God sends us.

93. To what may these sufferings be compared? They may be compared to bitter medicines.

94. In what way? As bitter medicine is good for our body, so are all the sufferings which God sends us good for the soul.

95. What ought we not to do in time of suffering and contradictions? We ought not to complain or murmur against God.

96. To what should the belief in God's omnipotence still further serve us? It should serve to keep us humble.

97. To what persons does this particularly apply? Particularly to those persons who are proud of their deeds.

98. Why has man no reason to be proud of what he does? Because he does not do it from his own power but accomplishes it with God's assistance.

99. Who gives man powers of soul and of the body whereby he is capable of doing anything? These powers are given to him by God.

100. Has he any cause then to be proud of his labor when God gives him the powers thereto? No, man has no occasion to be proud.

101. Can you give me an example from Sacred history where God proved to mankind that without His assistance they can do nothing? The tower of Babel.

102. How did God bring to naught this work of man's pride? By the confusion of languages.

103. When, therefore, man accomplishes anything very great, who is it that gives him the means to do it? God gives him the means thereto.

104. To whom then belong honor and glory? Honor and glory belong to God.

105. If a man is intelligent, wise and rich in temporal goods, ought he to be proud of it? No, he ought not to be proud of it.

106. Why not? Because he has received it all from God.

107. To what should our belief in God's omnipotence still further serve us? It should deter us from doing evil.

108. For what reason? Because God is able on account of His omnipotence to punish men severely.

109. Can you give me proofs of this from Sacred History? Kore, Dathan and Abiron were swallowed up by the earth—Ananias and Saphira died a sudden death—Absalom who rebelled against his father remained hanging to a tree by his hair, etc.

110. To what is wisdom contrary? Wisdom is contrary to foolishness.

111. When is a man a fool? When he chooses the bad instead of the good, and makes use of the wrong means to attain his end.

112. If I were to give you a jewel and a flint, and you had to choose between the two, and if you were to refuse the diamond which was worth hundreds of dollars, and to choose the flint which was worth only a few cents what would you be? I should be very foolish.

113. What is contrary to omnipotence? Being powerless.

114. What is meant by being powerless? By being powerless is meant an absolute inability to help ourselves or others.

115. How for instance is the worm in the dust in comparison to man? It is powerless.

116. What can man do to it? He can kill it.

117. How is man in relation to God? Man is powerless.

118. If, for instance a man refused to die, what good would it do him? It would be of no use.

119. If all mankind wished to hurt God, to depose Him, what good would it be? It would be of no use.

130. Why not? Because man is impotent, but God is omnipotent.

Take this all thoroughly to heart, dear children, and let your constant endeavor be to have God for your Friend. This Almighty God will love you, and will always be your Friend as long as you lead a pious and virtuous life. But this same God will cause you to feel His omnipotence if you dare to transgress His Divine laws, and to act contrary to His will. But in all your troubles have confidence in God, who, on account of His omnipotence, is able to help you always, who in virtue of His goodness always desires to help you and in virtue of His faithfulness always will help you.

And should God send you sufferings and trials, do not murmur, complain or be discouraged. In everything that God does, He has His wise purposes, and if we cannot at once understand them, we shall understand later for what reason this or that was good, which appeared to us as an evil.

The wisdom of God can turn that which is the worst into the best. Strive to increase in wisdom like the Divine Child Jesus. Always choose the best as your aim, and always choose the best means to attain it. Then, as you increase in years, you will increase in wisdom and grace before God and man.

XII.

Of the Holiness and Justice of God.

Dear Children:—We come to-day to two other attributes or perfections of God, namely, to His Holiness and Justice. To say, God is holy, means that He loves and wills only what is good—*i.e.*, what is agreeable to His perfections—and that He abhors all that is evil. God's Will is as perfect as God Himself, it is therefore impossible that God can love anything evil. Every sin, even if it is only a small one, is an object of detestation in the sight of God. Hence He loves only what is to be eternally loved—the good; and He hates what alone is to be eternally hated—the evil. That God loves the good means that He delights and is well-pleased with good. That God hates evil means that He has the greatest dislike to it. A sinner consequently cannot be endured in the sight of God.

Men, indeed, love too, but they do not love what they ought to love, but what they ought to hate. They take pleasure sometimes in vain and worthless things, and sometimes in bad and sinful ones; for instance, in finery and dress, in money and earthly possessions, in high living and intemperance. And on the other hand many persons have a hatred for that which they ought to love; for instance, for right and justice, for virtue and innocence.

Holy Scripture says of God's holiness: "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity. (Ps. xliv. 8.) God shows His holiness:

1. By His commandments and prohibitions. In all His commandments God commands only that which is good, and prohibits only evil. You will never find that God has prohibited anything good or commanded anything evil. Everything that God has commanded or prohibited in the Old and New Laws, proves that God has no other desire than that good should be spread abroad amongst mankind, and that sin and evil as the root of all misfortune should be avoided amongst men.

2. By the voice of conscience. You have been told that the voice of conscience calls to man constantly, "Do good and avoid evil!" Conscience is nothing but God's voice, and as this voice urges us to holiness, therefore, God, who placed it within us, must be holy.

3. By His behavior towards the good and towards the bad. In the entire Holy Scriptures God shows His love always for the good, but He rejects the wicked. Therefore, Holy Scripture says: "The

eyes of the Lord behold the just, and His ears are attentive to their prayer." Thus God loved Abel and looked down upon his sacrifice with pleasure. Thus God loved Noe, and saved him in the ark at the great flood, whilst the wicked men were destroyed from the face of the earth. Thus did God love Abraham and his cousin, Lot, and saved them whilst the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed by fire, and their inhabitants were killed.

God's holiness animates us to become like Him. We, too, should love nothing but the good, and abhor nothing but evil. If this is hard for us, we should think of those Saints of Heaven who have gone before us, and have given us by their holiness such beautiful examples. No particular state of life is necessary to lead a holy life, well pleasing to God; we can live holily in every station of life, as the lives of the Saints prove. If we feel a desire to live as the wicked do, we should remember the sublime reward which God has promised to those who walk before Him in holiness and justice.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What means God is holy? God is holy means that He loves and wills only what is good—*i.e.*, what is agreeable to His perfections, and that He abhors all evil.

2. What is therefore impossible in virtue of God's holiness? It is impossible that God should love evil and abhor good.

3. What is every sin in the sight of God? Every sin is an object of displeasure in the sight of God.

4. What, on the other hand, is every good action in the sight of God? An object of delight.

5. Do men love good and hate evil as God does? No, men do not love good and hate evil.

6. What do men love? They love that which they ought to hate.

7. And what do they hate? That which they ought to love.

8. What do men often take pleasure in? In vain and worthless things.

9. For instance? In finery and dress.

10. In what else? In money and high-living.

11. How do they feel towards virtue and justice? They abhor and dislike it.

12. What does Holy Scripture say of God's holiness? It says: "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity."

13. What does that mean? God delights in good and dislikes evil.

14. In what way does God show His holiness? By His commandments and prohibitions.

15. What is meant by commandments? What God has ordered to be done.

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16. What is meant by prohibitions? What God has forbidden to be done.

17. What has God enjoined in all His commandments? God has commanded only good.

18. What has He, on the other hand, always forbidden? He has forbidden evil.

19. What follows from this? That God loves nothing but good, and hates nothing but evil.

20. Say this in one word? That God is holy.

21. In what way does God still further show that He is holy? By our conscience.

22. What is conscience? Conscience is an interior voice.

23. To what does this interior voice urge man? It urges him constantly to do good and avoid evil.

24. Who placed this voice within us? God placed it within us.

25. What then must God Himself be? He must be holy.

26. In what way does God still further prove that He is holy? By His behavior towards good and towards the wicked.

27. What has God always shown towards good men? His approval and His love.

28. Mention some of those good men whom God loved? Abel, Noe, Abraham and Lot.

29. How did God prove His love for Noe? He was saved in the ark.

30. How did God show His love for Lot? He was saved from the city of Sodom.

31. To what does God's holiness animate us? It animates us to resemble God.

32. When do we imitate God's holiness? When we love good and practice it, and abhor and avoid evil.

33. Who has proved that men can live holily if they wish to? The saints in heaven.

34. Is a particular station of life necessary in order to lead a holy life, or can we live holily in all stations? We can live holily in all stations.

35. When, however, it seems hard for us to live holily, of what should we think? Of the sublime reward which God will give us.

36. What is this reward? Heaven.

God not only loves the good, He also rewards it; He not only abhors evil, but He punishes it, too. This comes from another attribute of God—His justice. What means: "God is just"? God is just means that He rewards and punishes men according to their deserts. God, therefore, in virtue of His justice, cannot punish the good, and reward the wicked. That God rewards and punishes according to our deserts, has, therefore, but one meaning. It means: God rewards even the smallest and least good, and punishes even the smallest and least evil. That God is just we see from Holy Scripture. Our first parents, as a punishment for their sin, were driven out of Paradise. After fratricide Cain led a restless life of torment, which was more terrible than death. Joseph's brethren were visited by a

great famine. The Egyptians caused the little Hebrew boys to be thrown into the water, for which they themselves found death in the Red Sea. The Israelites complained in the desert because they had no meat. God gave them meat and they ate so greedily thereof that numbers of them died. The Israelites in the desert made for themselves a golden calf and practiced idolatry. For a punishment they were obliged to remain in the desert for 40 years, until a better race had grown up amongst them. Abimelech had his brother killed on a stone, and a piece of mill-stone smashed his skull. The Prophet Jonas would not obey God and preach penance to the inhabitants of Nineveh. He wanted to cross the sea to flee from God. A violent storm arose, Jonas was thrown into the sea, and swallowed up by a whale. Susanna was saved from death, her accusers, however, were stoned. Daniel remained amongst the lions untouched, whilst his calumniators were devoured. The haughty minister Aman wished to bring Mordechai to the gallows, but he himself was hanged thereon.

With what does God reward the good even in this life? 1. With an interior peace. You, dear children, have certainly already performed some good deed, given an alms, or practiced some other good work. How happy and delighted you felt! What an inexpressible gladness and joy did you experience! Behold, this is the first reward which God gives us: an inward, heavenly peace.

God rewards good also, 2. with temporal blessing. For this reason God said to Abraham: "Because thou hast done this (offered up thine only son, Isaac, to Me in sacrifice) I will bless thee, and thou shalt abound in blessings." And God favored Jacob, too, with temporal blessings. He became rich in the service of Laban.

How does God punish evil even in this world?

1. With an uneasy conscience. God grant that you may never experience the tortures of bad conscience. Men hurry restlessly hither and thither; all joy has departed from them, even sleep flees from the wicked. The wicked are tormented by remorse of conscience, as by a gnawing worm. Thus was Judas driven to commit suicide, when his bad conscience caused him to despair.

2. With temporal afflictions. The sons of Heli were for their father's offense killed on the same day in battle. The servant of the Prophet Eliseus, whose name was Giezi, was afflicted with leprosy for his lies. Absalom, who took the field against his father, lost his life on an oak tree. Kore, Dathan and Abiron were swallowed up

by the earth because they were disobedient to Moses, the servant of God. King Herod's body was devoured by worms whilst he still lived. The boys of Bethel, who reviled the Prophet Eliseus, were torn to pieces by wild animals. The sick man at the pool had to do penance for 38 years for the sins committed in his youth. The Jews, as a punishment, were dispersed over the whole earth.

Yet there still remains much good in the world that is unrewarded, and much evil that is not punished. But as God rewards all good and punishes all evil there must be a state of perfect retribution. Therefore the Catechism asks: "When will perfect retribution be made?" The answer says: Perfect retribution will not be made until the soul is in the other world; there is, however, even in this life, no true happiness for the wicked, and no true unhappiness for the just. All good, therefore, that is not rewarded in this world, and all evil that is not punished in this world, will find its retribution in eternity. Certainly in this world many wicked persons seem exteriorly to do well, and many good people badly, as we read in the Scriptures of the rich glutton. However, this state of things is so only in appearance and is transitory. For if we could look into the heart of a good person we should find that he is not unhappy, and if we could see into a bad man's heart we should find that he was not really happy. This state of appearances is only a transitory one; for the years which are allotted to us here below pass very quickly, and only on the other side of the grave will perfect retribution be made. Therefore Jesus says to the good man: "Be glad and rejoice, for your reward will be great in heaven!" Jesus, the Son of God Himself, had to die like a criminal upon the cross, although He could say to Himself: "Who amongst you can accuse me of sin?" It must not confound us or make us waver in virtue when we see that the good have it hard here and the wicked have it pleasant. We should look beyond to that place where every one will receive his reward or his punishment according to his deserts.

1. The thought of God's justness should deter us from evil and sin.

The severity of hell's punishments may be gathered from the words of Scripture: "A fire that is never extinguished, and a worm that gnaws eternally." The punishments of hell appear still more terrible because they endure eternally. This circumstance and that there is no possible deliverance from hell, ought to inspire man with fear. For this reason in every temptation to evil we

should remember the chastisement which awaits the sinner in the next life.

2. The remembrance of God's justice should animate us to be virtuous, and to persevere in good. What a great reward awaits the virtuous in the next world! Holy Scripture says: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those that love Him." This unspeakable happiness God will give to all those who have deserved it.

3. We should further endeavor to imitate God's justice, that is, to esteem and reward good wherever we find it, and on the other hand to despise evil and have it punished wherever we find it. And if our conscience says it is satisfied with us, and we cannot reproach ourselves with any sins, we must not be proud of our supposed righteousness. We should say, like St. Paul: "I have worked much (done much good) but not I, but the grace of God in me." For perfection it is necessary that we do good and avoid evil not to be seen or praised of men, as the Pharisees did, but for love of God. It is God who will judge us, and He knows the most secret recesses of our hearts. All good is worthless in the sight of God if we do it only from motives of self-interest. We should, however, be careful in our judgment of other people. It is not for us to judge our neighbor, God alone exercises that office. He is all-wise and He alone can decide as to a person's worth or worthlessness. Many a person whom we do not consider to be good, is so in God's sight. Man is not what he appears to be on the outside, but that which he really is inwardly. And as God alone searches the heart and reins, so ought we to leave to God the judgment of our fellow-beings.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What means: God is just? God is just means that He rewards and punishes men according to their deserts.
2. Whom will God reward? God will reward the good.
3. Whom will he punish? He will punish the wicked.
4. How will God reward the good and punish the wicked? According to their deserts.
5. What then is impossible in virtue of God's justness? It is impossible that God should punish the good and reward the wicked.
6. What good will be rewarded, and what evil will be punished? All good, even the very least will be rewarded, and all evil, even the least, will be punished.

7. From what do we see that God is just? From the Holy Scriptures.

8. What men were the first to receive punishment from God? Our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise.

9. What punishment did they receive? They were driven forth from Paradise.

10. For what reason were they punished? Because they transgressed the command of God, and ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree.

11. How did God punish Cain for his crime? Cain led a restless and tormented life which was more terrible than death.

12. What had Cain done? He killed his brother Abel.

13. How were sinners punished in the time of Noe? They were exterminated from the face of the earth by a flood.

14. How were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed? Fire fell from heaven and burnt the cities.

15. How were Joseph's brethren punished? By a great famine.

16. Of what sin were they guilty? They sold their brother Joseph into slavery.

17. How did God punish the Egyptians? They were drowned in the Red Sea.

18. How did God punish the Israelites in the desert for practising idolatry? They had to remain forty years in the desert and could not enter the Promised Land.

19. How was Moses punished for wavering in his confidence in God just once? He could not enter the Promised Land, but could only see it from afar.

20. How was Abimilech punished? A piece of a mill-stone smashed in his skull.

21. What awful crime had he committed? He caused all his brothers to be killed on a stone.

22. What punishment befell the Prophet Jonas? He was thrown into the water and swallowed up by a whale.

23. Of what offense was Jonas guilty? He wanted to flee from God that he might not have to preach penance in the city of Nineveh.

24. What punishment befell those men who accused Susanna falsely? They were stoned.

25. What punishment came to Aman, the proud minister, who had prepared Mordechai's downfall? He was hanged upon the same gallows which he had had erected for Mordechai.

26. In what way does God reward the good even in this life? With inward peace.

27. What is understood by inward peace? The peace of the soul and interior joy which man experiences when he does anything good.

28. What will you do to procure for yourself this interior peace? I shall do all the good I can.

29. How does God still further reward the good in this life? With temporal blessings.

30. To whom did God give these blessings? To Abraham.

31. Whom else did God reward with temporal blessings? Jacob.

32. Ought we, however, only to do good so as to be blessed in this life by God? No, we should not do good only to be blessed in this life by God.

33. How would that man be who did good only so as to be blessed by God? He would be selfish.

34. Have good works performed from selfish motives any worth before God? No, they are worthless before God.

35. How does God punish the wicked even in this world? By an uneasy conscience.

36. What does an uneasy conscience cause man? It causes him fearful torments.

37. In what do these fearful torments consist? A bad conscience gives man no peace by day or night.

38. Can a man thus tormented be joyful? No, he cannot be joyful.

39. How does he go about the world? Without peace and without gladness.

40. How great is the torture of bad conscience? So great, that it brings many persons to despair.

41. Of whom did we see this related in Holy Scriptures? Of Judas.

42. What crime had Judas committed? He had betrayed our Lord for 30 pieces of silver.

43. To what was he driven by his bad conscience? To despair—he hanged himself.

44. If you want to preserve the peace and rest of your soul, what ought you to avoid? Every occasion of sin.

45. How does God still further punish the wicked in this world? With temporal afflictions.

46. What affliction befell the highest priest Heli, for instance? His sons died in one day in battle.

47. How was Giezi, the Prophet's servant, punished for his lies and deceit? He was afflicted with leprosy.

48. What punishment overtook Absalom who rebelled against his father? He remained hanging by his hair to an oak tree, and thus he died.

49. What happened to Kore, Dathan and Abiron? They were swallowed up by the earth.

50. What punishment overtook King Herod? His body was devoured by worms whilst still alive.

51. How were the boys of the little town of Bethel chastised for reviling the Prophet Eliseus? They were torn to pieces by wild beasts.

52. What do you know of the sick man at the pool? He suffered 38 years for the sins of his youth.

53. What affliction descended upon the Jewish people because they crucified Christ? They were dispersed into all parts of the earth.

54. Will all evil be punished in this world and all good rewarded? No, all evil will not be punished in this world, nor all good rewarded.

55. When will perfect retribution be made, that is to say, when will all good be rewarded, and all evil punished? Perfect retribution will not be made until the soul is in the other world.

56. How is it with many wicked people in this world? All goes well with them.

57. And how is it with many good persons in this world? Things go badly with them.

58. Are the wicked or unjust really happy? No, only apparently so.

59. What is wanting to their real happiness? Inward peace—peace of soul.

60. Are the virtuous really unhappy in this world? No, they are not really unhappy.

61. What makes them rich and happy? The peace and quiet of their souls.

62. Ought it to make us waver in virtue, or strengthen the sinner in evil, if perfect retribution is not made in this world? No, that should not cause us to waver in good.

63. For what should the frequent remembrance of God's justice serve? To deter us from evil.

64. What thought is particularly fitted to deter us from evil? The thought of the punishment of hell.

65. Why are the punishments of hell so awful? 1. Because they are terrible in themselves, and, 2. Because they will endure eternally.

66. What does Holy Scripture say of the torments of hell? It calls them a worm that gnaws eternally, and a fire that burns forever.

67. Why are the punishments of hell eternal? Because no deliverance is possible from the pains of hell.

68. To what should the thought of God's justice still further animate us? It should animate us to persevere in good until our death.

69. Is heaven then such a great reward? Yes, it is a great reward.

70. What does Holy Scripture say of the bliss of heaven? It says: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those that love Him."

71. For what should the thought of God's justice still further serve us? For helping us to endeavor to imitate the justice of God.

72. How may we imitate the justice of God? By esteeming good and rewarding it, and having evil punished.

73. What should we do if with God's grace we have so lived that our conscience does not reproach us? We should not be proud of our supposed justice.

74. What did the Apostle St. Paul say of his good works? St. Paul said: "I have worked much, but not I, but the grace of God in me."

75. Of what should we be particularly careful in all our good works? That we do not do them to be seen or praised of men.

76. Who did good to be seen and praised by men? The Pharisees.

77. What ought we to do in judging others? We should be very careful in our judgment of others.

78. To whom does the judgment of others really belong? It belongs to God alone.

79. Why? Because He alone is omnipotent, and knows the intentions of each one.

80. What words of Holy Scripture may here be used? "Man beholds that which is on the outside, but the Lord sees the heart."

And with this we shall conclude the lesson for to-day, in the hope that you will constantly strive to imitate God's holiness and justice, that you may one day participate in that great reward which the Saints now enjoy in heaven.

XIII.

Of God's Goodness, Mercy, and Long-suffering.

Dear Children:—To-day we come in the explanation of God's attributes, to His goodness, mercy, and long-suffering. God is good means that out of love He does good to all creatures, and that He really bestows innumerable blessings upon us. God, therefore, loves mankind; He desires that all men should be happy, and to make them happy He confers innumerable blessings upon them.

Now the blessings which God heaps upon mankind are twofold: 1. Corporal blessings; and 2. Spiritual blessings.

The corporal blessings, for instance, are: Life, health, our straight limbs, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and feeling, or the five senses of man. The spiritual blessings are: Understanding, by which we know and think; free will, by which we are able to choose; the forgiveness of our sins, by which we become again the children of God, the grace of God, the practise of good, and everlasting bliss.

This goodness of God extends even to the animals. The sparrow on the roof and the worm in the dust receive what they require from God just as man does. How great God's blessings are, of what value they are to mankind, is thought of by few. What sum of money could any one offer you for one or both of your eyes? For what sum of money would any of you part with your hearing or speech?

The greatest proof, however, of His love which God has given mankind is that He delivered His own Son up to death for the salvation of sinners. Through sin man had separated himself from God, rebelled against his Supreme Lord, and forfeited all God's love and goodness. Instead of withdrawing His hand altogether from ungrateful humanity, He turns to them in love and kindness again and gives His only begotten Son in sacrifice, so as to lift up fallen man. For this reason Holy Scripture says: "By this hath the charity of God appeared toward us, because God hath sent His only begotten Son in to the world, that we may live by Him."

From God's goodness toward us there arise for us various duties:

1. We ought to be very grateful to God, our best Father, for the many blessings which He gives us. We thank a person for a small gift; for instance, for a piece of bread, for a drink of water, etc. Why

should we not thank God, who has lavished so many, and such great blessings upon us?

2. We ought to make good use of God's blessings. With our eyes we should gladly look at that which is good, with our ears we should gladly listen to the Divine Word, with our mouth we should pray willingly and proclaim the praises of God; with our feet we ought cheerfully to go wherever we can do good; with our hands we should work diligently and give alms generously from our temporal possessions.

3. We should not lightly estimate God's gifts, and we should strive to imitate God's goodness by being good and kind toward our fellow men. None of God's gifts are insignificant. How often, for instance, has a person's life been saved by a crust of bread or a drink of water? We should be good and kind toward our fellow men. The more a person is blessed by God with prosperity, the more opportunity he has of giving alms and doing good. Even a poor person can give of the little he has to those still poorer than himself. Therefore Holy Scripture says: "Hast thou much, then give much; but if thou hast only a little, give then gladly of that little."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What means: God is good? God is good means that out of love He will do good to all creatures, and that He really bestows innumerable blessings upon us.

2. To whom then does God wish all good? God wishes good to all creatures.

3. What is understood by all creatures? The animate and inanimate, the reasoning and unreasoning creatures.

4. What means: God wishes good to all creatures? He loves all creatures.

5. Name the chief of God's creatures upon earth. Man.

6. How many kinds of blessings has God conferred upon mankind? Two kinds: (1) Corporal blessings and (2) Spiritual blessings.

7. Name the corporal blessings. Life and health, straight limbs, food, and clothing, etc.

8. Name some of the spiritual blessings. Reason, free will, He grants us the forgiveness of our sins and the grace to do good.

9. What will God give us after this life? Eternal happiness.

10. What does God prove by the many blessings which He grants mankind? He proves His love for mankind.

11. Do men appreciate God's blessings as they ought? No, they do not.

12. Name some of God's priceless blessings. Sight, hearing, speech, straight limbs, health.

13. Would you, for instance, part with your eyes or speech for, say, a thousand million dollars? No, I would not.

14. What is the greatest proof of divine love for us men? This, that God gave His only begotten Son to redeem us from sin.

15. Why did man have to be redeemed? Because by sin he had fallen away from God.

16. What might God have done to sinful humanity? He might have withdrawn His protection.

17. What would have been the result? Man would have been annihilated.

18. Why did God not turn away from sinful man? Because He loved him.

19. What do we owe God for the many blessings which He has bestowed upon us? The greatest gratitude.

20. What should we do therefore after meals, for instance? We should thank God for what He gave us.

21. What ought we to do when God afflicts us with a serious illness? We should thank Him.

22. What is the best way for us to express this gratitude? By making the right use of God's blessings.

23. What ought you to do with your eyes? I ought only to look at that which is good.

24. What ought you to do with your ears? I should listen attentively to the Divine Word.

25. What ought you to do with your mouth, with your speech? I should pray gladly and proclaim the praises of God.

26. What ought you to do with your hands? I should work diligently and give alms cheerfully.

27. Where should our feet willingly lead us? To those places where we can do good.

28. What should we think of God's gifts? We should not estimate them lightly.

29. How can we imitate God's goodness? By being kind and gentle toward our fellow men.

30. What persons stand most in need of our kindness? The poor and needy.

31. In what way should we help them? By giving them alms.

32. Is it necessary that we should give much when we have only a little ourselves? No, we need only give a little with a good heart.

33. What does Holy Scripture say of giving? "If thou hast much, give much, but if thou hast only a little, then give willingly of that little."

Never forget to thank God frequently and fervently for His goodness; be kind always to your fellow men, particularly to the poor and needy.

We have heard, then, that God is good to all men, not only to the good, but also to the wicked.

Now, God shows His goodness toward wicked men who do not deserve His love and goodness, by mercy and long-suffering.

God is merciful means that He is disposed to avert all evil from His creatures, and therefore willingly pardons all truly penitent sin-

ners. The sinner is expected to make advances toward the love and goodness of God; to know and acknowledge his misdeeds; to repent sincerely and truly; to promise amendment; to avoid sin and its near occasions, and to make good whatever harm he has accomplished by his sins.

That God is merciful is proved: 1. By the distinct utterance of Holy Scripture: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live." (Ez. xxxiii. 11.)

The Psalmist David says: "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so powerful is his mercy to those who fear him." And in another place: "Gracious and merciful is the Lord."

2. By many examples from Holy Scripture. Our first parents sinned in Paradise, and yet God had mercy upon them and promised them a Redeemer.

The inhabitants of the city of Ninive had sinned grievously against God, and yet God had mercy upon them and did not destroy their city. King David sinned grievously against God, and yet God announced forgiveness to him by the Prophet Nathan, because he did penance.

Achab, in a penitential spirit, clothed himself in a hair shirt, fasted and slept in mourning garments, and God turned aside the punishment from him.

Jesus said to the penitent Magdalene: "Thy sins are forgiven thee!"

To the thief upon the cross Jesus said: "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

The relation of the sinner to God is beautifully and feelingly described in the parable of the prodigal son. The degenerate son rebels against his father, forsakes him, and wanders about the world. God punishes him; repentant, he takes counsel with himself and says: "I will arise and go to my father." He puts his resolve into execution, returns to the parental roof and throws himself penitently at his father's feet. The father lets mercy take the place of justice, he does not rebuke him; he opens his arms and presses him to his heart. Thus should every sinner act. Every sinner should understand and acknowledge how grievously he has offended God; every sinner should arise and return to his heavenly Father, then God will open His fatherly arms and receive him into His favor again. The mercy of God should encourage us (1) to turn to God full of hope even in

the most grievous sins and faults; (2) to be merciful and forgiving toward those who have offended us. Holy Scripture says: "And if your sins are as red as scarlet I will wash them whiter than snow." If a heavy weight of sin bears us to the ground, we ought not despair, but turn to God seeking mercy, and He will not reject us. But as God is merciful to us, so should we be merciful toward those who have offended us, otherwise we pray a lie when we say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

34. How does God prove His love toward wicked men? By mercy and long-suffering.

35. What means: God is merciful? God is merciful means: that He pardons all truly penitent sinners.

36. Does God pardon all sinners without exception? No, only the penitent ones.

37. What then must the sinner do in order to obtain God's forgiveness? (1) He must acknowledge his misdeeds; (2) He must repent of them sincerely; and (3) he must be ready to sin no more and to make satisfaction.

38. What does Holy Writ say of God's mercy? "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

39. What does the Psalmist David say of God's mercy? "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is my mercy for those who fear me."

40. How merciful was God, for instance, toward our first parents? He promised them a Redeemer.

41. How merciful was God toward the inhabitants of Ninive? He did not destroy their city.

42. How merciful was God toward David? He announced pardon to him through the prophet Nathan.

43. How did Jesus speak to the penitent Magdalene? Jesus said: "Many sins are forgiven thee, because thou hast loved much!"

44. What did Jesus say to the man who had been sick 38 years? "Depart, thy sins are forgiven thee!"

45. What did Jesus say to the penitent thief upon the cross? "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

46. In which parable is the mercy of God beautifully described? In the parable of the Prodigal Son.

47. Tell me what you know about it. (The pupil recites the parable.)

48. Who is understood by the father? By the father is understood God Himself.

49. Who is understood by the degenerate son? Those persons who forsake God, and turn away from Him.

50. Who is understood by the good son? Those persons who do not forsake God, but remain faithful to Him.

51. In what way does God seek the sinner's conversion and amendment? By visitations.

52. What chastisements are sent to wicked men? Sufferings and afflictions of various kinds, sicknesses, misery, want, poverty, misfortunes, etc.

53. What ought we to recognize in these afflictions and sufferings? A dispensation of God for our amendment.

54. What does God do when a penitent sinner returns to Him? He forgives him.

55. What should we do therefore when we have sinned? We ought to turn to God again

56. What should we do to those who have offended us? We ought to forgive them.

57. How do we pray, for instance, in the Our Father? "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us."

58. How does that person pray who does not forgive his enemies? He prays a lie.

God shows His goodness toward wicked men also by His long-suffering. God is long-suffering means that He often waits a long time before He punishes the sinner, in order to give him time for repentance. As soon as a man commits a grievous sin He incurs the Divine chastisement. But God does not send this chastisement at once, although He has the right and the power to do so, and through this postponement of the merited punishment man gains time to know his misdeeds, and to turn again to God. For this reason, then, Holy Scripture says: "Thou overlookest the sins of men for the sake of repentance." (Wis. xi. 24.) Holy Scripture gives us many proofs that God is really long-suffering. In the time of Noe God gave the sinners one hundred and twenty-one years in which to amend and be converted; when, however, they did not do this, for a pnunishment He let the flood descend upon them.

The Prophet Jonas, at God's command, admonished the inhabitants of the City of Ninive that in "Forty days Ninive will be destroyed." They profited by the time of grace, did penance, and were converted from their evil ways.

As a parable of God's long-suffering we quote the story of the unfruitful tree. Holy Scripture tells us the following: A rich man had planted a fig-tree in his vineyard. Now, every year he came to see if any fruit had appeared upon it, but he never found any. Then, displeased, he said to the gardener, "Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down, therefore, why doth it take up the ground?" But the gardener said: "Let it alone this year also, until I dig about it, and dung it; if happily it bear fruit; but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." The unfruitful tree is an image of the sinner; who brings forth no good fruit, no works of piety and virtue, and is only fit to be cut down because he takes up the ground. But the gardener pleads for him for one more year's respite, and promises during this

time to do everything in his power. Thus does God leave no means untried to lead the sinner to better ways. But if he pays no heed to God's offers of grace he is then a hardened sinner, and has only himself to blame if he is lost eternally. Although God is so long-suffering, it would be extremely dangerous for a sinner to put off his repentance and amendment until death; for who can tell when and where we shall die? Who can give us assurance of what the next hour will bring to us? Does any one know when he goes to bed at night in good health whether he will live to see the morning? We should learn from this to amend while there is yet time, and not to put off our repentance.

59. What means: God is long-suffering? God is long-suffering means: that He waits a long time before He punishes the sinner, in order to give him time for repentance.

60. What does every man deserve for the sins he has committed? Every man deserves punishment for the sins he has committed.

61. What purpose has God in His long-suffering? He wishes to give the sinner time to do penance.

62. What then does God's long-suffering prove? It proves how good God is toward the sinner.

63. What does man gain by God's long-suffering? Man gains time to be converted and amend.

64. Can you give me some examples of God's long-suffering? Yes, the sinners in the time of Noe.

65. How long a time did God give them in which to do penance? One hundred and twenty years.

66. What reminded them constantly during this time of repentance and amendment? The building of the ark.

67. Did they make use of this time to do penance and amend? No, they did not.

68. What punishment overtook them? The flood.

69. Give another example. The inhabitants of the city of Ninive.

70. How long a time did God give the Ninivites? God gave them forty days.

71. What use did they make of this time? They did penance and amended their lives.

72. What did God do therefore? He remitted the intended punishment.

73. What parable in the bible relates the long-suffering of God? The parable of the unfruitful tree.

74. Tell me about it. (The pupil recites the parable.)

75. Who is understood here by the owner of the barren tree? God.

76. Who is meant by the barren tree? All those persons who do not bring forth good fruit.

77. How long did the owner look for fruit upon that tree? For three years.

78. But as he never found any what did he order? He ordered that the tree should be cut down.

79. But what did the gardener plead for? For another year's trial for the tree.

80. What did the gardener promise to do during this time? He promised to dig around it and manure it.

81. What did the owner do then? He let the tree stand for one more year.

82. How long a time does God give every man in which to do penance and amend? As long as he lives.

83. In what other ways does God exhort mankind to penance and amendment? By various misfortunes and punishments.

84. Mention some of these punishments. They are sicknesses, deaths, etc.

God exhorts men also by accidental events to penance and amendment. For instance, we meet a funeral. Involuntarily the sinner reflects: You, too, must die one day! You had better amend your life before it is too late. Or we pass a cemetery. Involuntarily the sinner thinks: "Who knows what day I shall be borne to the grave; amend, then, that you may not die in your sins and be lost for all eternity!"

85. To what time do most people put off the amendment of their lives? To the time of old age.

86. But who gives man the certainty of attaining to old age? No one can assure us of this.

87. What might happen to us at any moment? We might die.

88. What should this teach us? That it is dangerous to put off repentance and amendment of our lives.

I will conclude to-day's lesson by exhorting you to live piously in the fear of God, so that an amendment of your lives may not be necessary. As the flowers blooming in the meadows fall beneath the mower's sickle, so does death snatch away many persons in the bloom of their youth, at a time when they least thought of dying. Give heed to those finger posts of God which remind us so earnestly of our mortality and perishableness; listen to the tolling of the bell for the dead, to the striking of the clock, and to other admonitions and warnings which God sends us.

XIV.

God is True and Faithful.

Dear Children:—In to-day's instruction we come to the last of the Divine perfections, namely, that God is true and faithful. God is true means that He reveals nothing but truth, because He can neither be mistaken nor lie. God's truthfulness comes from an emanation of His holiness. By virtue of His sanctity God hates everything that is evil, therefore He hates untruthfulness and lies. By virtue of His omniscience He also knows the truth, and by virtue of His truthfulness He reveals only truth. With God, therefore, there can be no question of error or lies. For this reason Holy Scripture says: "God is not as a man, that He lies." "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord."

Men very often say an untruth because they do not know the truth, and when they know it they often lie because they do not want to speak the truth.

This is not the case with God. It is impossible for God to lie. God is not only true, but He is also faithful. God is faithful means that He surely keeps His promises, and does what He threatens. God's faithfulness, therefore, comes from His truthfulness. As God is truthful in His revelations, so is He truthful in His promises. He fulfils the good which He promises, but He also fulfils the threats which He makes.

The faithfulness of God is proved by many examples from Sacred History. God threatened our first parents: "If you eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree you shall surely die." God executed this threat to our first parents.

The sinners in the time of Noe were threatened by God with a flood if they did not amend. God executed this threat. God made many promises to Abraham. First God promised to lead him into a land flowing with milk and honey. Furthermore, God promised him that He would multiply his descendants as the stars of heaven, and finally God promised him that from his descendants the Redeemer should come.

All these promises were kept by God.

God promised the Israelites happiness and blessing if they kept His commandments faithfully, and God kept His promise.

God promised Jacob that He would lead him back to the country of his fathers, and He also kept this promise.

God promised holy Simeon that he should not see death before he saw Christ the promised Messiah, and God fulfilled His promise.

God threatened the inhabitants of Jerusalem by His only begotten Son with destruction and ruin, if they did not profit by the time of visitation and grace, and God fulfilled this threat.

God's truth and faithfulness incite us:

1. To imitate God's truth and faithfulness. We imitate God's truth by never telling a lie, neither in jest or of necessity, or from malice, remembering the words of Holy Scripture: "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." We imitate God's faithfulness by always keeping our promises. If we can not keep a promise we should not make one, and if we have made it we ought to keep it, except we had promised to do something wrong. A promise of that nature ought not to be kept.

2. We ought to believe implicitly in the revelations of God, and steadfastly confide in His promises. Abraham affords us a model of strong faith and firm confidence.

God's truthfulness should incite us also to faithfully keep the commandments of God, so that the promises of God may be fulfilled in us. The reward for good, and punishment for evil, which God promised to others, applies to us also. A beautiful example of this is given to us by the Machabee brothers. With what steadfastness did they not look on, while one after another of their number was led to death by the executioner, and with what anguish must their mother's heart have been torn; and yet they wavered not. Such tortures are not destined for us, hence we ought to fulfil the commandments of God all the better, confiding in the Lord's promises: "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Which of God's attributes have we spoken of to-day? Of God's truth and faithfulness.

2. What means: God is true? God is true means: that He reveals nothing but truth, because He can neither err nor lie.

3. What does God reveal? He reveals only the truth.

4. Why does God reveal only the truth? Because He can neither be mistaken nor lie.

5. With which of God's attributes is His truth connected? With His sanctity.

6. For what reason? Because God in virtue of His holiness loves all good and abhors all evil.

7. What can not God do in virtue of His truth? He can not err nor lie.

8. What means: He can not err? It means: God can not be mistaken.

9. What means: God can not lie? It means: God can not speak an untruth.

10. Does God know the truth? Yes, He knows it.

11. By virtue of which attribute? By virtue of His knowing all things.

12. Does God also wish to speak the truth? Yes, God wishes to speak the truth.

13. By virtue of which attributes? By virtue of His holiness and truthfulness.

14. What does Holy Scripture say of God's truthfulness? Holy Scripture says: "It is impossible that God should lie."

15. Give me another verse of Scripture about God's truthfulness. "God is not a man, that He lies."

16. Why do people sometimes speak untruthfully? Because they do not know the truth.

17. And why when they do know it? They sometimes do not wish to speak the truth.

18. Who brought lies into the world, who was the first liar? The evil spirit—the devil.

19. For what purpose did he use lies? To tempt our first parents to evil.

20. Where then do lies lead? Lies lead to perdition.

21. Whose child is the liar? He is a child of the devil.

22. Do you then wish to be a child of the devil? No, I do not wish it.

23. What then should you always love and speak? I must always love and speak the truth.

24. What other attribute of God have we learnt to know to-day? God's faithfulness.

25. What means: God is faithful? God is faithful means: that He surely keeps His promises, and executes what He threatens.

26. With which of God's attributes is His faithfulness connected? With God's truthfulness.

27. How did I explain this to you? Just as God is truthful in what He says so He is truthful in what He promises.

28. What has God promised to the good? God has promised them eternal happiness.

29. With what has God threatened the wicked? With eternal punishment.

30. Will God then fulfil what He has promised and what He has threatened? Yes, God will fulfil it.

31. Why will He fulfil it? Because He is faithful.

32. What proof can you give me of this? Holy Scripture.

33. With what did God threaten our first parents? God said: "If you eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, you shall surely die."

34. Did God put this threat into execution? Yes, God executed it.

35. With what did God threaten the sinners in the time of Noe? He threatened them with a great deluge.

36. Did God fulfil this threat? Yes, God fulfilled it.

37. What did God promise Abraham? (1) That He would lead him into a land flowing with milk and honey; (2) that He would multiply his descendants as the stars of heaven; and (3) that from his descendants the promised Redeemer should come.

38. Did God also fulfil these promises? Yes, every one of them.

39. What did God promise to Jacob? God promised him that He would lead him back again into the land of his fathers.

40. Did God keep His promise? Yes, God kept it.

41. What did God promise the Israelites? That as His chosen people He would specially protect and bless them.

42. Did God keep His promise? Yes, God kept His promise.

43. What did God promise to Zacharias? God promised a son to him.

44. Did God fulfil this promise? Yes, God fulfilled it.

45. What promise did God give to Simeon? That he should not die before he had seen the promised Messiah.

46. Did God fulfil His promise? Yes, God fulfilled it.

47. What promise did God make to the whole human race? He promised them a Redeemer and Saviour.

48. Did God fulfil this promise? Yes, God fulfilled it.

49. What do we see by all these proofs? That God is faithful.

50. To what ought God's truth and faithfulness incite us? That we should imitate God's truth and faithfulness.

51. How can we imitate God's truth? By never telling a lie.

52. How can we imitate God's faithfulness? By always keeping our promise.

53. But if we can not keep a promise made? Then it was not right to make such a promise.

54. In what case ought we not to keep a promise made? When we have promised to do anything wrong.

55. Why do men not keep their promises? Either because they can not or will not.

56. Is this the case with God? No, with God it is not thus.

57. Can God keep His promise? Yes, for He is almighty.

58. Does He also wish to keep it? Yes, for He is good.

59. Will He also keep it? Yes, for He is faithful.

60. To what should the thought of God's truthfulness further encourage us? To believe absolutely all God's revelations.

61. Who was a model of steadfast faith? Abraham.

62. What promise did God make to him in his old age? That Abraham should be the ancestor of a great people.

63. Did Abraham have the least doubt of this? No, Abraham did not doubt it in the least.

64. To what should the thought of God's truth and faithfulness still further encourage us? That we should always faithfully fulfil God's commandments and persevere in virtue.

65. What then will be fulfilled in us? God's promises.

66. Which of God's promises? "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

67. Who has given us an example of the greatest steadfastness in virtue? The seven Machabees and their mother.

68. What did they try to make them do? They tried to make them eat meat forbidden by the law.

69. How did they try to force them to this? By the greatest torments.
70. Did they waver in virtue? No, they remained steadfast.
71. Are such torments and martyrdom destined for us? No.
72. What then should we all the more strive to do? We should persevere steadfastly in good.
73. What reward has God promised those who persevere in the words of Holy Scripture? "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

The Catechism asks further: To what should the knowledge of God's attributes eminently serve us? 1, to believe in God's truth and faithfulness; 2, to confide in Him, the All-wise and Almighty; 3, to love Him, the infinitely good and merciful; 4, to fear Him because He is infinitely holy and just; and 5, to avoid sinning even in secret before Him who is omnipresent and omniscient." As we have already spoken of this in the explanation of each of God's attributes, a further explanation is unnecessary.

The Catechism asks further: "Can we also see God?" The answer says: "No; we can not see God with bodily eyes, because He is a Spirit." Only material things are visible to our bodily eyes, therefore a purely spiritual object, which is not composed of parts and has no body, is invisible to our bodily eyes. Hence St. John says: "No one hath ever seen God."

As human beings, and because it is hard for us to imagine a purely spiritual being, we represent God the Father to ourselves, as He is usually portrayed, as an old and venerable man, with the scepter and the globe in His hand. God's eternity and omnipotence, His wisdom and goodness are thereby sensibly represented to us. Jesus Christ, who lived upon earth as a man, is sensibly represented to us, at times, as an infant in Mary's arms, as a boy at His parents' side, as the dying Redeemer hanging upon the cross, as risen victorious from the dead with the flag in His hand, and finally as the good Shepherd. The Holy Ghost is generally represented in the form of a dove, because in this form He appeared at the Baptism of Jesus. The triangle, in the middle of which an eye is represented, is the emblem of the Most Holy Trinity, and betokens that eye which sees and knows all things. As we can not see God the question might arise in us: How did we arrive at the knowledge of God and His attributes since we can not see God? The answer says: "God has made Himself known to man in different ways."

God certainly did not require subordinate creatures, angels and men to His happiness and perfection. He wished, however, accord-

ing to His inscrutable decrees, that created beings, angels and men should participate in His happiness. And that they might do this He Himself gave the knowledge of His attributes as well as His will to mankind, *i. e.,* He revealed Himself to them, that it might be possible for His creatures to attain to union with Him.

Whereby has God made Himself especially known to men?

1. By the visible world, which He has created and continually governs.

2. By the voice of consience, and

3. Principally by Revelation.

1. By the visible world, whereby we include not only the earth, with its creatures, but the whole universe. God especially reveals His omnipotence, His wisdom and His goodness. Take whichever of God's creatures you will, and no matter how small it may be, you will find that a man is not capable of producing it; that it has a general or special usefulness, and that it is so formed and arranged that it could not possibly have been formed or arranged better.

2. By the voice of conscience God has revealed to us His sanctity, for the interior voice of conscience exhorts us to do good and warns us of evil. But if our conscience exhorts us to holiness He who has placed this voice within us must be holy.

3. By Revelation we understand that which God has made known to us, partly in the Old Law through Moses and the Prophets, partly in the New Law through Jesus and His Apostles. It is our business now to employ those means whereby we can attain to a knowledge of God. As God has done His part, so must we also do ours, that we may learn to know Him.

The Catechism asks further: Is there more than one God? The answer says: No; there is but one God. By belief in one God Christianity is distinguished from heathendom. The heathens believed in many Gods, Christians believe in only one God. We have proofs that there is only one God (a), from reason, and (b) from Revelation. The proofs from reason are these: The attributes of God can only be united in one Being. Several beings can not possess the same Divine perfections. Besides, by the presence of several gods in the governing of the world, disturbances would arise, for if one god willed this, another god would will something else. Hence arises the necessity that there should be only one God to rule. The following are proofs from Holy Scripture: Upon Mount Sinai God said: "I am the Lord thy God!" not: We are the Lords thy

Gods! Furthermore: "Thou shalt have no strange gods before me." Another verse of Scripture says: "I am God, and there is no other god, and none is like unto Me."

Why do we say, "I believe in God," and not, "I believe God"?

Because we must not only believe that there is a God, and that all that He has said is true, but we must likewise give ourselves up to God with love and confidence. The little word *in* expresses our union with God. We should not only fear God as our Supreme Lord, but we should also attach ourselves to God with childlike love and confidence. We ought to be convinced that God uses His power out of love toward us, for our protection and our assistance, that we may not be separated from God, the Supreme Being. We should give ourselves up to Him with love and confidence, and unite ourselves to Him.

74. Can we also see God? No, we can not see God with bodily eyes, because He is a Spirit.

75. Why then is God invisible? Because He is a Spirit.

76. What is a spirit? A spirit is a being having understanding, reason, and free will, but no body.

77. What then does a spirit not have? A spirit has no body.

78. What does St. John say? St. John says: "No one has ever seen God."

79. But as we material men like to represent to ourselves that which is supernatural, how do we represent to ourselves God the Father? As an old and venerable man, with a scepter and globe in His hand.

80. What is thereby sensibly represented to us? God's eternity, wisdom, omnipotence, and government of the universe.

81. How is Jesus Christ represented to us? At times as an infant in the arms of Mary His Mother, again as a boy at His parents' side, or sitting upon the clouds, or with the cross in His arms, then as He hung upon the cross, and as He arose from the grave, also as the Good Shepherd feeding His sheep.

82. How is the Holy Ghost represented? By the emblem of a dove.

83. Why is this? Because the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of a dove at the baptism of Jesus.

84. By what emblem is the most Holy Trinity represented to us? By a triangle with an eye.

85. For what reason? Because the three sides making one figure represent the three Divine Persons who are only one God.

86. We have just heard that we can not see God with bodily eyes. How then have we come to the knowledge of God and His perfections, since we can not see Him? God has made Himself known to man in different ways.

87. How can we say this in other words? God has revealed Himself to man.

88. Are creatures necessary to God's happiness and perfections? No, He has no need of them.

89. Still, what did God desire? He desired that creatures should participate in His happiness.

90. What did God do therefore to make this possible to men? He revealed Himself to men.

91. In other words? He made known to them His will.

92. In what way did God make Himself known to us, how has He revealed Himself to us? (1) By the visible world, which He created and always governed; (2) By the voice of conscience; and (3) By revelation.

93. How first has God made Himself known to us? By the visible world, which He created and always governs.

94. What is understood by the visible world? We understand thereby everything that God has created.

95. Which of God's perfections do we recognize in created things? We recognize therein God's omnipotence, goodness, and wisdom.

96. How do we perceive God's omnipotence therein? Because a man is not capable of copying or producing the least thing that God has created.

97. How do we perceive the goodness of God from created things? Because God has created everything for the use and well-being of man.

98. How do we recognize God's wisdom from created things? Because everything that God has created is so wisely arranged that it could not possibly have been arranged better.

99. In what other way has God made Himself known? By the voice of conscience.

100. What is conscience? Conscience is an interior voice, which exhorts us continually to good, and warns and restrains us from evil.

101. Which of God's attributes do we learn to know from the voice of conscience? God's holiness and justice.

102. What do we infer from the voice of conscience? We infer that He who placed this voice within us must be holy and just.

103. How has God made Himself still further known to man? By revelation.

104. What is understood by revelation? We understand by revelation everything which God has made known to us for our salvation, through the Patriarchs and Prophets, and then through His Son Jesus Christ.

105. Now if God on His part has done everything to reveal Himself to us, what must we do? We must employ all the means whereby we may learn to know God.

106. Is there more than one God? No, there is only one God.

107. How can you prove to me that there is only one God? (1) By reason and (2) by revelation.

108. How can you prove from reason that there is only one God? Because the perfections of God can only be united in one Being.

109. What would happen if there were several gods? The government of the world would be disturbed.

110. For what reason? Because each god might will something different.

111. What necessity arises therefore from this? That there can be but one God.

112. In what way can you give further proof that there is only one God? From Holy Scripture.

113. What did God say on Mount Sinai when He gave the ten commandments? "I am the Lord thy God."

114. What would He have said if there had been several gods? "We are the Lords thy gods."

115. Give another verse of Scripture? "I am God, and there is no other God, and none is like unto Me!"

116. What must we infer from these words? That there is but one God.

117. But why do we say: "I believe IN God? Because we ought not only to believe that there is a God and that everything that He has revealed is true, but we ought at the same time to give ourselves up to Him with love and confidence.

118. What then does the little word "in" express? Our union with God, our love and affection toward Him.

119. What does God require of us? That we should not only fear Him as our Supreme Lord, but that we should love Him as our best Father.

120. Is it sufficient to believe only in God's omnipotence? No, we must also believe that God makes use of His omnipotence for our protection and assistance.

121. When may we in particular abandon ourselves with childlike confidence to God, and be assured of His protecting love? When we are His good children.

122. What is therefore the application? "My son, give me thy heart! O give it to Him the infinitely beautiful and bountiful One, the best and most faithful, without delay, for evermore—God desires to possess it so as to make it happy."

123. Why does Holy Scripture say "Son"? So as to express our childlike relation to God.

124. What does that mean: "My son, give me thy heart"? It means: "Be united to me in love."

125. Why is God called infinitely beautiful and bountiful? To express His infinite perfections.

126. Why is God called the best and most faithful? Because God will make those happy who give their hearts to Him.

"Give it to Him, the infinitely beautiful and bountiful One," means, in other words, "Delay not to give thy heart to God; He is worthy that thou shouldst love Him, for He is the Supreme good. Apply these words to yourselves. Give your hearts to your Father for evermore, God wishes to possess them, so as to make them happy. What unutterable mercy is in those words: "My son, give me thy heart"! God, the Supreme Lord, whom heaven and earth can not contain, He deigns to ask you for your heart. He says, as it were: "Come to my faithful, fatherly heart! With Me only will you find what you are seeking: Peace, rest, joy, and happiness." Who could be so indifferent and foolish as to hear those words without obeying their invitation? We, too, then will be children of God; we, too, wish to feel ourselves happy in His paternal heart until God shall receive us into the abode of everlasting peace, where we shall behold Him face to face.

XV.

On the Three Divine Persons. "I Believe in God the Father."

Dear Children:—The second paragraph of the first article of the Creed treats of the three Divine Persons. The three Divine Persons are called, as you already know: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. They are called Divine Persons because each one of them is true God. In their totality or union they are called the Most Holy Trinity.

We will speak first of God the Father. The Catechism asks: Why do we say, "I believe in God the Father"? The answer says: 1, Because God is our invisible Father in Heaven; and 2, Because in God there is more than one Person, the first of whom is called the Father. In the word Father lies the confession that we are created by God and are dependent upon Him, that we have received from God everything that we need for our body and soul, and that we owe Him as a duty, gratitude, love, reverence and obedience. There lies, furthermore, in the word "Father" the hope that we as children may participate in our Father's goods. By the word "Father" we should be reminded that upon earth we belong to one great family, that we are therefore brothers and sisters, and ought to love one another. God is our invisible Father, because He is a Spirit, an invisible Being, the opposite of our natural, human, and visible father. But we also say so because in God there is more than one Person, the first of whom is called the Father.

The Catechism asks further: How many Persons are there in God? The answer says: "There are three Persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

The word "Person" must not be confounded according to natural ideas with the words "human person." The word "Person" means in this case a Being existing of Himself who knows that He exists, and possesses understanding and freedom. Now our holy Religion teaches us that in God there are three Persons (neither more nor less) namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Our human understanding would never have arrived at this had not God Himself revealed that there were three Persons.

A sentence in the writings of the Prophet Isaias—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts!" points to this. To the Prophets

of the old law enlightened by God, the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity was not unknown, for they described the coming Redeemer as God whom all people should adore, and prophesy concerning the Spirit of God, whom the Lord would pour out upon all flesh.

Holy Scripture speaks very plainly in the New Testament, partly by events, partly by the declaration of Jesus and His Apostles, that there are three Persons in the Godhead.

The Archangel Gabriel said to Mary: "Behold thou wilt bear a Son . . . . the power of the Most High will overshadow thee, the Holy Ghost will descend upon thee, and therefore also the Holy that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God!"

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan the heavens above Him were opened, the Holy Ghost hovered visibly over Him in the form of a dove, and from the clouds was heard the voice of God: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." When Jesus sent forth His Disciples He said to them: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In another place Jesus says: "When the comforter (the Holy Ghost) whom I shall send from the Father, shall come, He will give testimony of me." St. John says: "There are three that give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one."

Besides this it has always been an article of faith in the Catholic Church that in one true God there are three Divine Persons. The Catholic Church administers all the holy Sacraments in the name of the Triune God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Everywhere is the prayer: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." All the prayers of the Church conclude with the words: "Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, for ever and ever. Amen." The holy sign of the cross was always used, and the form of blessing: May the Most Holy Trinity bless thee; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

The Catechism further asks: "Is each one of the three Persons God?" The answer says: "Yes, the Father is true God, the Son is true God, and the Holy Ghost is true God."

I. Of the divinity of the Father St. Paul writes: "One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all." But the Father is also a Divine Person. He is mentioned, namely, in Holy

Scripture as the Person who created the world, who sent the Son to redeem us, and from whom, as also from the Son, proceeds the Holy Ghost. These actions were undertaken by a free, reasonable and independent Being, therefore God the Father must be a particular Person of the Godhead.

II. The Son is true God. This article of faith was confirmed by the Council of Nice, where Jesus Christ was called "of the same substance with the Father," and "true God of true God." The contrary doctrine was rejected and condemned by the Church as heresy.

The Divinity of Jesus is proved further by His own expressions. "I and the Father are one." "He who sees Me, sees also the Father." "Whatsoever the Father doeth, in the same way doeth the Son also, that they may honor the Son, as they honor the Father." When Christ was asked publicly and solemnly by the chief justice, "Art thou Christ, the Son of God?" and life or death depended upon His answer, He replied: "I am." Jesus proved this statement by His miracles and prophecies, of which we shall speak later.

III. The Holy Ghost is also true God. This we know from distinct sentences of Holy Scripture. Jesus said to His Disciples: "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Peter said to Ananias and Saphira: "You have not lied to a man, but to God the Holy Ghost."

The Divinity of the Holy Ghost was confirmed also at the Council of Constantinople by the institution of that symbol which is said by the priest in the Mass: "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, together with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified: who spake by the prophets." Perfections are here given to the Holy Ghost which only belong to God; consequently He must also be God. St. Matthew says: "Whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, will neither be forgiven in this world nor in the next." Therefore the Holy Ghost must be God, if a blasphemy against the same be threatened with so severe a punishment. The Catechism further asks: "Is there then but one God?" The answer is: "Yes, the three Divine Persons are but one God." In this sense St. Athanasius says: "Although Father and Son are two, still they are only one God." St. Basil says: "Father and Son are not two Gods, because there is no other Divinity in the Father than in the Son." The Creed of St. Athanasius says: "The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy

Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods but one God." "Why are the three Persons but one God?" Because all three Persons have one and the same indivisible nature and substance.

The three Divine Persons have one nature and substance means in other words: "They have the same attributes and perfections. Each of the three Persons is God, because each one has the Divine Nature and substance, but they are not three Gods, but only one God."

The Catechism asks: "Is any one of these Persons older, or more powerful than the others?" "No; all three Persons are from eternity; all three are equally powerful, good, and perfect."

One Person is not older than the other, that is to say, the Father was not before the Son, and the Father and the Son were not before the Holy Ghost, but all three were from eternity. All three Persons are equally powerful, good, and perfect. No Person is superior to the others, no Person has perfections which the others have not, and all perfections are possessed equally by the three Divine Persons, in the same measure. As God the Father is almighty, good, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, just, merciful, long-suffering, wise, true, and faithful, so also in equal measure is the Son and the Holy Ghost. How are the three Divine Persons distinct from one another? By this: "That the Father is begotten of no one, nor proceeds from any one; the Son is begotten of the Father; and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son."

But although we say: the Son was begotten of the Father, still He is not a creature of the Father, and does not stand therefore upon a lower step of perfection, but He has the same Divine attributes as the Father. You must not think, therefore, that the Father existed first, that then the Father begot the Son, and that from both Father and Son proceeded the Holy Ghost, for there was not a moment in which the Son and the Holy Ghost did not exist, otherwise they would not be eternal or so perfect as God the Father. To remove all such doubts the Catechism asks: "But if the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from both, why, then, is none of the Divine Persons older than the others?" The answer says: "Because the Son is begotten from all eternity, and the Holy Ghost also proceeds from all eternity. The begetting of the Son and the proceeding of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, did not take place in time, but in eternity, and as we can not understand eternity, we therefore can not comprehend or fathom the way that this beget-

ting and proceeding happened. It remains for us a mystery which we must believe with childlike humility.

Although all three Divine Persons have only one nature and substance, and are only one God, to each of the three Divine Persons is attributed a special work for the happiness of mankind; to the Father the Creation; to the Son the Redemption; and to the Holy Ghost the Sanctification, although these works are common to all three Persons. It would therefore be erroneous for any one to believe that the Father accomplished the Creation alone, the Son the Redemption alone, and the Holy Ghost the Sanctification alone. That these individual operations should be attributed by preference to a particular Person happens only for a more exact distinction of the three Divine Persons themselves. The Son and the Holy Ghost therefore participate in the Creation, the Father and the Holy Ghost in the Redemption, and the Father and the Son in the work of sanctification. What do we call this mystery of one God in three Persons? The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity.

Can we understand this mystery? "It is impossible for our feeble understanding, which can only imperfectly comprehend created things, to understand a mystery which is infinitely exalted above all created things."

We mortal and weak men know only that which God has thought good to reveal to us; everything else remains for us a mystery. Even holy men like St. Augustine were unable to search into this mystery, to fathom and to comprehend it. We are even unable to give an account of much that we can see with our eyes, and, as it were, grasp with our hands; for instance, take the magnet, which attracts iron, how the feeling of electricity and magnetism is produced in our own bodies by other bodies; how lime is made to boil by cold water, and many similar things. Hence Holy Scripture says: "Thou art great, O God, and inaccessible to our thoughts."

The moral application is that we must never forget what thanks we owe to the Most Blessed Trinity for the inestimable blessings of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, and what we solemnly vowed in holy Baptism." In remembrance of this we celebrate the feast of "Holy Trinity."

We receive, then, in particular three blessings from the Most Blessed Trinity, which are inestimable, namely: Creation, whereby our earthly life is given to us, the greatest temporal good; Redemption, whereby heaven is opened to us, the greatest eternal good, and

Sanctification, whereby from a state of sin we are placed in a state of grace, without which we can not enter into heaven. The feast of the Most Holy Trinity, which we celebrate on the Sunday after Pentecost, was instituted so as to strengthen our faith in the Most Blessed Trinity. It is the same also with the sign of the cross. We will now have a repetition of the lesson:

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the three Divine Persons.

2. What are the three Divine Persons called? They are called: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

3. Why are they called Divine Persons? Because each one of these three Persons is true God.

4. What are these three Divine Persons called in their totality or union? The Most Blessed Trinity.

5. Of what does the word threefold remind us? That there is a distinction between the three Divine Persons.

6. Of what does the word Triune remind us? That all three persons are only one God.

7. What is the first of the three Divine Persons called? The first is called God the Father.

8. Why do we say "I believe in God the Father"? We say so (1) Because God is our invisible Father in heaven; and (2) Because there are several persons in God of whom the first is called Father.

9. What then is God to us? God is our invisible Father.

10. Why is God particularly our Father? (1) Because He created us and (2) Because He loves us and gives us everything that we need for body and soul.

11. If God is our Father, what are our obligations toward Him? (1) The obligation of gratitude; (2) The obligation of love; and (3) The obligation of reverence and obedience.

12. Why do we owe gratitude to God? Because He heaps upon us countless and priceless blessings.

13. Why do we owe love to God? Because God also loves us, and loved us first.

14. Why do we owe reverence and obedience to God? Because God is our Supreme Lord.

15. If God is our Father, what may we hope for as His children? We may hope to take part in His treasures.

16. Of what does the word Father still further remind us? It reminds us that all mankind are brothers and sisters.

17. Why do we say further: "I believe in God the Father"? Because in God there are several Persons, of whom the first is called Father.

18. How did mankind come to know that God was threefold in Person? God revealed it to us.

19. Where has God revealed it to us? In the writings of the Old and New Testaments.

20. What passage in the writings of the Prophet Isaias indicates that there are three Persons in God? The verse: "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Hosts!"

21. How can you prove to me from the New Testament that there are several or three Persons in God? The angel Gabriel said to Mary: "Behold, thou wilt bear a son; . . . the Holy Ghost will come down upon thee and the power of the Most High will overshadow thee, and the Holy that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

22. What circumstance at the baptism of Jesus denoted the presence of the three Divine Persons? When Jesus, the Son of God, was baptized by John in the Jordan, the Holy Ghost hovered over Him visibly in the form of a dove, and out of the clouds sounded the voice of the heavenly Father saying: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

23. With what words did Jesus send forth His Apostles into the whole world? With the words: "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

24. What does the Evangelist St. John say of the trinity and unity of God? He says: "There are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One."

25. From which of Jesus' words can we still further perceive the trinity of God? Jesus said: "I will ask the Father and He will give you another comforter, the Spirit of truth."

26. What does the Catholic Church teach of the trinity of God? She teaches that in the one true God there are three different Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

27. How does the Catholic Church therefore administer all the holy Sacraments? In the name of the Blessed Trinity, of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

28. How does she undertake her consecrations, her blessings, and her vows? In the name of the Most Blessed Trinity: of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

29. The catechism now asks: "Is each one of the three Persons God"? "Yes, the Father is true God, the Son is true God, and the Holy Ghost is true God."

30. How did I prove to you that the Father was a distinct Divine Person? Because He sent the Son for the Redemption; and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

31. How can you prove that the Son of God also is true God? By His own words.

32. What are those words? Jesus said: "I and the Father are One." "Whosoever seeth Me, seeth the Father also." "Whatsoever the Father doeth, the Son doeth also, that all may honor the Son, as they honor the Father."

33. What does Jesus do in all these passages of Scripture? He makes Himself equal to the Father.

34. What did He desire to intimate by that? That He was God equally with the Father.

35. What answer did Jesus make to the judge when He was asked: "Art thou Christ, the Son of God?" Jesus said: "I am."

36. What took place upon this confession? Jesus was condemned to death.

37. At what council was the Divinity of Jesus confirmed as an article of faith? At the Council of Nice.

38. What motive was given for this? Heretics had arisen who denied the Divinity of Jesus.

39. What decision did the Council of Nice make? That Jesus Christ was of the same substance as the Father, and true God.

40. But what became of the false doctrine which denied the Divinity of Jesus? It was condemned.

41. How can you prove to me that the Holy Ghost is God also? When Jesus sent His Apostles forth into the world He said to them: "Go ye, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

42. Give another proof. In the Gospel of St. Matthew it says: "Whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, will neither be forgiven in this world nor in the next."

43. What then must the Holy Ghost be therefore? He must be God.

44. Why? Because a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is declared to be so great a sin.

45. Can you tell me what decision the Council of Constantinople pronounced as to the Divinity of the Holy Ghost? It called the Holy Ghost the "Lord and lifegiver, who proceeded from the Father and the Son, who was glorified equally with the Father and the Son, and who spake by the Prophets."

46. What is attributed to the Holy Ghost in this passage of Scripture? The Divine attributes are attributed to Him.

47. What then must the Holy Ghost also be? He must be God, equal to the Father and the Son.

48. What did the Apostle St. Peter say to Ananias and Saphira? Peter said to Ananias: "You have not lied to a man, but to God the Holy Ghost."

49. But if not only the Father is God, but also the Son and the Holy Ghost, are there therefore three Gods? No, the three Divine Persons are only one God.

50. What decision of St. Athanasius did I quote to you? He said: "The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God, yet there are not three Gods, but only one God."

51. Why are the three Persons but one God? Because all three Persons have one and the same indivisible nature and substance.

52. What means one nature and substance? They have all the same attributes and perfections.

53. Explain this more clearly. All three Persons are equally powerful, good, omnipresent, holy, merciful, long-suffering, just, faithful, true, eternal, and unchangeable.

54. Is any of these Persons older, or more powerful than the others? No, all three persons are from eternity; all three are equally powerful, good, and perfect; because all three are but one God.

55. Which of the three Persons was therefore first? Neither was the first.

56. Was not the Father before the Son? No, the Father was not before the Son.

57. What then can we say of the existence of the three Divine Persons? That all three Persons are from eternity.

58. What means: the three Divine Persons are equally powerful and good? Each one of the three Divine Persons has the same perfections and in the same measure.

59. How are the three Divine Persons distinct from one another? By this: "That the Father is begotten of no one, nor proceeds from anyone; the Son is begotten of the Father; and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son."

60. But if the Son is begotten of the Father, might we not think that God the Father is older than the Son? No, the Father is not older than the Son.

61. Why not? Because otherwise the Son of God would not be eternal and not so perfect as the Father.

62. But if the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from both, why, then, is none of the Divine Persons older than the others? Because the Son is begotten from all eternity, and the Holy Ghost also proceeds from all eternity.

63. Can we understand this? No, it is a mystery.

64. What do we call this mystery? The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity.

65. What works are principally attributed to each of the three Divine Persons? (1) To the Father are attributed the works of omnipotence and particularly the Creation; (2) To the Son the works of wisdom, and particularly the Redemption; and (3) To the Holy Ghost the works of love, and particularly the Sanctification; although these works are common to all three Persons.

66. How is God the Father called? He is called the Creator.

67. What is God the Son called? He is called Saviour and Redeemer.

68. What is the Holy Ghost called? He is called Sanctifier and Comforter.

69. But if the works of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification are common to all three Persons, why is a particular work attributed principally to each one? This is done to give a more exact distinction to three Divine Persons.

70. What do we call this mystery of one God in three Persons? We call it the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity.

71. Can we comprehend this mystery? No, it is impossible that our weak and limited intellect, which can not understand even created things, except imperfectly, should comprehend a mystery which is infinitely above all created things.

72. What was that holy doctor of the Church called, of whom I once told you that he wanted to search into the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity? The holy doctor of the Church St. Augustine.

73. By whom was he taught that it was impossible? By an angel.

74. Relate it to me. (The pupil relates the circumstance.)

75. You said that man understands created things only imperfectly. Can you name some of these things to me? How the magnet attracts iron, for instance; how lime is heated by cold water, and brought to the boiling point, etc.

76. What verse of Scripture tells us that the nature of God and the Most Blessed Trinity are unfathomable? The verse: "Great art thou, O God, and inaccessible are thy thoughts."

77. What feast do we celebrate every year in honor of the Most Blessed Trinity? The feast of Holy Trinity.

78. On what day is this feast celebrated? On the Sunday after Pentecost.

79. What motive did the Church have in instituting this feast? (1) To strengthen our belief in the Most Holy Trinity; and (2) To augment still more our love for the three Divine Persons.

80. What sign reminds us of the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity? The sign of the cross.

81. Of what should the sign of the cross remind you? Of the great blessings which we owe to the Most Blessed Trinity.

82. What are these blessings? (1) Creation; (2) Redemption; and (3) Sanctification.

83. What has God given us by Creation? Our earthly life.

84. What did Jesus give us by the Redemption? The heirship and hope of eternal blessedness.

85. What does the Holy Ghost give us by Sanctification? We are transferred thereby from a state of sin to a state of grace and sanctification.

86. What does the Catechism call these blessings? It calls them inestimable.

87. Why are they called inestimable? Because they are so great that their value can not be estimated.

88. The application enjoins upon us never to forget what we have solemnly promised to the Most Blessed Trinity in the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. What did you promise the Most Blessed Trinity in Baptism? We promised: (1) To believe the Holy Catholic doctrine firmly and steadfastly; (2) To avoid sin and the dangerous occasions thereof; and (3) To lead a life pleasing to God.

89. Now what must you do your whole life if you do not want to be unfaithful toward the Most Blessed Trinity? We must keep our promise.

I exhort and encourage you therefore to honor and invoke the Most Blessed Trinity. You should begin and end the day by invoking the Most Blessed Trinity. You should invoke the Most Blessed Trinity on rising in the morning and on going to rest at night. You should invoke the Most Blessed Trinity upon leaving the house and upon entering it again. You should invoke the Most Blessed Trinity on entering the house of God and on leaving it, and you ought to recommend yourselves to the Most Blessed Trinity in all the circumstances and dangers of life. The Most Blessed Trinity should accompany us from the cradle to that small space of mother earth where our earthly remains are blessed for eternal rest by the invocation of the Most Blessed Trinity. If you live thus you will enter in where the Most Blessed Trinity is enthroned in everlasting glory, and herewith we will conclude the religious instruction for to-day by saying: "May the Most Holy Trinity bless us, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen!

XVI.

Of the Creation and Government of the World.

Dear Children:—In to-day's religious instruction we come to the doctrine of the creation and government of the world. "Why is God called Creator of heaven and earth?" "Because God created the whole world, the heavens, and the earth, and all that is in them." You must, to begin with, have some idea of "creation." To create means to produce something out of nothing. For instance, men can produce different things, but not in the way that God does. When men want to make anything, they require time, tools, material, laborers, and strength. The mason, for instance, builds a wall out of stones and cement; the locksmith makes a lock out of iron; the carpenter makes tables, chairs, bureaus, and other articles; the baker bakes bread made of flour, salt, water, and yeast in a hot oven. But no man has ever produced anything out of nothing. God alone can do that by virtue of His omnipotence. All the men and artists of the entire world are not capable of making the least of things which God has created.

By these words, "heaven and earth, and all that is in them," the whole visible and invisible world is meant, as mountain and valley, land and sea, sun, moon, stars, men and animals, plants and stones. When the world is spoken of, you must not imagine that only the earth upon which we live is the world. The stars that you see at night twinkling in the sky are bodies similar to our earth, and belong to the universe, which is also called globe. Besides the visible world or visible things, God has also created invisible beings, namely, the angels. How then did God create all things? Answer: Out of nothing. There was no matter there before creation out of which God could have created the world; it only existed by His almighty will. God said, "Let it be!" and it was! Therefore Holy Scripture says: "Thou hast created all things; and for thy will they were and have been created" (Apoc. iv. 11). We have already heard, in the last instruction, that the work of creation is principally attributed to God the Father; but this must not be understood as if the Son and the Holy Ghost did not participate in it, but that the Triune God is the author of the whole universe. But why did God create the world? He is infinitely rich and happy

in Himself, and needs nothing besides Himself. What then could have induced Him to create the world? Answer: His goodness. He desired not only to be happy Himself, but He wished that other beings should be happy. Therefore God created the angels, men and animals, and plants and stones, etc.

In how many days did God create the world? In six days. On the first day God said, "Let there be light," and God thereby divided the light from the darkness.

On the second day God separated the water from the waters, and made the atmosphere and the air of the earth which carries the clouds and the vapors over it.

On the third day God divided the water from the solid ground. There arose seas, rivers, brooks, and springs; and dry land upon which He caused to grow grass, herbs, bushes, and trees in their different kinds.

On the fourth day God created the "lights" in the heavens in their wonderful order and their course according to fixed laws, the sun, the moon, and the stars, to illuminate the world and divide up the time.

On the fifth day God created the beasts of the waters and the birds of the air.

On the sixth day God created the tame and wild animals of the earth that live upon the land. And after having ornamented the world in this manner, and arranged it as a dwelling-place for mankind, God created the masterpiece of creation—man. It is here a question of six days of creation. By this you need not imagine days that last from one midnight to the other, for by one of these days of creation we may understand a period of time of one or many thousands of years. It only means how and in what succession God gradually, that is to say, by degrees, created the world. Hence sacred history tells us that God rested on the seventh day, although God was not fatigued by the creation and therefore did not need to rest. It only means that God ceased to create.

Why, then, did God create the world? (1) For His glory and (2) for the good of His creatures. God then created the world firstly for His glory; that means, with the intention of revealing His Divine attributes by visible things and first of all His omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness. In this way the Creation is, as it were, an open living book before us, in which we can read the greatness, the power, the wisdom, and glory of God; a mirror in which we can

behold His greatness. Therefore the Psalmist David says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the works of His hands." God created the world secondly for the good of His creatures, particularly for man's use. One object of creation is useful to another one. For instance, rain promotes the growth of plants, and plants serve as food for man and beast. Everything that you see serves man by preference either for his food, or for his clothing, or his health, his service, use, or pleasure. Man can even tame the most powerful wild animals and make them useful to him. But that creation may continue to exist and not perish God preserves the world and governs it.

God preserves the world means: He causes it to continue in the manner He pleases, and as long as He pleases. The world has already lasted many thousand years, and every spring it awakens to new beauty and fresh glory. Regularly night follows day, and day night; dew and rain still give it its power to produce seed and harvest time; spring, summer, autumn, and winter change alternately with one another.

God governs the world means: He takes care of all things, orders all things, and directs all things to the end for which He created the world. God takes care of all things, of the imperfect and least of creatures as well as of mankind. God takes care of the worm in the dust, of the sparrow upon the roof, of the worthy and the unworthy, of the good and the bad. He gives food to man and beast, and sunshine and rain to plants.

God orders and directs all things. He directs not only mankind as a whole, but each individual one to that end which he is to attain according to His infinite wisdom. We see this most clearly from Holy Scripture. Joseph in Egypt was sold into slavery by his brethren; God, however, so directed it that he became the governor or representative of the king in Egypt. Moses was placed in a basket of rushes and left on the banks of the Nile. He would have starved and perished, but God so directed the footsteps of the king's daughter, that she found the child Moses; her heart was so touched that she took him to her house and had him brought up at the royal court. How miraculously the Israelites were saved through Esther, how miraculously were the plans of the proud Aman brought to naught. In the history of the New Testament, also, the providence of God is shown most miraculously. When the three wise men came to Jerusalem to seek the child Jesus, Herod dissembled

and begged the Magi that they should tell him where they found the child Jesus. God's providence, however, frustrated his plan (Herod wanted to kill the child Jesus), for an angel appeared to the three wise men in a dream and warned them not to return to Herod in Jerusalem. In the same way an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and bade him flee into Egypt. This belief in Divine providence is also confirmed by reason. Since God is omniscient, nothing in creation escapes Him, because He is good out of love. He wishes good to all creatures, because He is all-wise. He knows the best means to reach His end, and because He is almighty He can execute that which He has determined upon as good. This care of God's in preserving and governing the world is called Divine providence. Herewith the belief in a blind accident or mere chance is denied. Nothing happens by accident; all things are directed by God's providence. But even with this care of God for us we must not be idle. It is not sufficient to place an unlimited confidence in God, because He can help, desires to help, and will help us; but we should also on our part cooperate with Him. But if God orders and directs all things, why, then, is there so much evil done? Does He will it? No, God wills not the evil; but He permits it (1) because He has created man free, and (2) because He knows also how to turn evil into good.

God can never will evil, for He is holy, and everything evil is contrary to His holiness. He permits it, however; that is to say, He lets it happen, He does not prevent it (1) because He has created man free, i. e., with a free will, by virtue of which man can choose between good and evil. If man had no free will, he would be obliged to do everything good by compulsion, and therefore would have no merit. God therefore permits evil, although He could prevent it by His omnipotence. Moreover, God's omnipotence and wisdom is so great that He knows how to turn evil into good. We find this confirmed not only in Holy Scripture—for instance, the history of Joseph in Egypt—but also profane history affords us examples of it.

If God takes care of all things, why, then, is there so much suffering? There is so much suffering: First, that the sinner may mend his way and not perish forever; and, second, that the just man may more abound in merits, and thus obtain a greater reward in heaven.

There are, therefore, sufferings which the wicked have deserved, and undeserved sufferings which God sends to the just. The

school of suffering, or the way of the cross, is always the way to heaven. If man lived on in continual good health, in wealth, and pleasures, his heart would be too easily estranged from God, and turned toward the enjoyments of this earth, whereby he would lose sight of his supreme end, eternal blessedness. Sufferings, however, lead man back to God; they teach him to think of God and to pray to Him. The sufferings of this world are inflicted by God upon mankind always with the best intentions. Want and misery poverty and privation, for instance, make men industrious and inventive. A man who is just recovering from a severe illness prizes his health far more than one who has never been sick. As gold is purified by fire, so is man purified by sufferings and tribulations. For the sinner they are a sensible rod of correction, an exhortation for his conversion and turning again to God. As long as the prodigal son had money which he could squander, he never thought of returning to his father. But when hunger and want befell him he decided to return to his father.

Common sufferings, therefore, which befall whole countries and nations, as war, famine, infectious disease, etc., are sign-posts of God's acts of mercy which serve for our good. The lesson is: Never presume to murmur and to complain at the Divine dispensations, for God knows best what tends to our salvation. To murmur at God's decrees is called here a presumption, and rightly so. We shortsighted men do not know God's intentions; it is then a proof of distrust to murmur at God. It is also foolishness. What good does it do to murmur and complain in suffering? Does it deliver us or is it any use whatever? On the contrary, the more impatient a person is in suffering, the more difficult it is to bear the suffering. We will now go over the lesson again.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? We have spoken to-day of God as the Creator, the Preserver, and Governor of the world.

2. Why is God called "Creator of Heaven and earth?" Because God created the whole world, the heavens and earth, and all that is in them.

3. What does create mean? To create means to produce something out of nothing.

4. Who alone can create, *i. e.*, produce something out of nothing? God alone can do this.

5. Can not men also produce many things? Yes, but not in the way God does.

6. When men undertake to make something, what do they require for it? They require time, workmen, material, tools, etc.

7. When, for instance, the mason wants to erect a wall, what does he require for it? Stones, cement, tools, and workmen.

8. When the baker wants to bake bread, what must he have? He must have flour, salt, water, yeast, and a hot oven.

9. When the locksmith wants to make a lock, what does he require? He must have iron, fire, and different tools.

10. What man then is capable of forming a little flower or a blade of grass, a grain of sand, a fly, etc.? No artisan is able to form anything of this kind.

11. Why can they not do so? Because a man can not imitate the works of God.

12. What then has God created? The whole world, heaven and earth, and all that is in them.

13. What is indicated by these words? All the visible and invisible creatures which God has created.

14. Mention some visible creatures? Land and sea, mountain and valley, sun, moon, and stars, men and animals, plants and stones, air, fire, water and earth.

15. Mention the invisible creatures which God has created? The invisible creatures are angels.

16. How did God create all things? By His almighty will.

17. What does Holy Scripture say about this? God said: "Let there be," and it was.

18. How can God speak, as He is a spirit? It is not to be understood literally.

19. What does it mean in other words? He willed that it should be, and it was.

20. By what did God produce all things? By His almighty will.

21. What does Holy Scripture say of this? "Thou hast created all things; and for Thy will they have been created."

22. To which of the three Divine Persons is the creation principally attributed? To the Father.

23. Did, therefore, the Son and the Holy Ghost have no share in the creation of the world? Yes, they took part also in creating the world.

24. But as God is infinitely rich and blessed, what could have induced Him to create the world and the things existing in it? His goodness caused Him to do so.

25. Explain this more clearly to me? God did not wish to be happy alone. He wished also that other beings should be happy.

26. Which beings were to be happy with God? Angels and men.

27. But for what purpose did God create those things which could not be happy; for instance, animals, plants, and stones? God created these things for the use or service of man.

28. In what time did God create all things? In six days.

29. Where is the History of Creation told? In the first Book of Moses (Genesis).

30. But how could Moses know about it, as he lived about 2,500 years after the creation of the world? God must have revealed it to him.

31. What is understood in ordinary life by a day? We understand thereby a period of 24 hours.

32. Were the days of creation these kind of days? No; they were not these kind of days.

33. What period of time did a day of creation probably embrace? Many thousands of years perhaps.

34. What then does it mean: "God created the world in six days"? It means, that God created it gradually, by degrees.

35. What did God do on the seventh day? God rested on the seventh day.

36. Who are those who have to rest? Those persons who are tired after their work.

37. Was God tired after having created the world? No, God can not be tired.

38. What then does it mean: "God rested?" It means only that God ceased creating.

39. For what purpose did God create the world? 1. For His glory and (2.) for the good of His creatures.

40. What means God created the world for His glory? God willed by the creation of the world to reveal a part of His attributes.

41. To what therefore may we compare the visible world? To an open book, or to a mirror.

42. Which of God's attributes are revealed to us by the visible creation? The omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness of God.

43. What says the Psalmist David of the visible world? "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the works of His hands."

44. For what other purpose did God create the world? For the good of His creatures.

45. For which creatures? For mankind.

46. What purpose do all things serve which God has created? They serve for the food of man, his drink, clothing, dwelling, health—for his use and enjoyment.

47. What does God still do that the world may not return into its original nothing? He preserves and governs it.

48. What means: "God preserves the world"? He causes it to continue as long as He pleases.

49. Will the world last forever? No; it will one day be destroyed.

50. What is meant by destroyed? That it will cease to be.

51. When will this happen? At the last day.

52. When will this day come? God alone knows.

53. In what condition does God preserve the world? In the same glory and beauty as it was in the beginning of creation.

54. What order still exists in the world as it did thousands of years ago? The alternate changes of day and night, spring, summer, autumn, and winter, seed and harvest time, sunshine and rain.

55. How does God govern the world? God takes care of all things, orders and directs all things to the end for which He has created the world.

56. How can you prove this to me? From Holy Scripture.

57. What is the particular verse? "God made the little and the great, and He hath equally care of all." (Wis. vi. 8.)

58. What is here understood by little and great? The imperfect and the perfect creatures.

59. Who belongs, for instance, to the perfect creatures of God? Mankind.

60. Who belongs to the imperfect? Animals and plants.

61. How is the belief in Divine Providence and the government of the world also confirmed by reason? As God is omniscient, nothing escapes His notice in the whole of creation.

62. As God is good what does He wish only? Out of love He wishes good to all creatures.

63. As God is all wise, what does He choose? He chooses the best means to attain the good.

64. And as God is almighty what does He possess? He possesses the power to carry out all His decrees.

65. What do we call this supreme care of God in preserving and governing the world? His Divine Providence.

66. How do unbelieving men call that which we call "Providence"? They call it accident.

67. Does anything happen in the world from mere accident? No; everything happens by God's Providence.

68. To what should the belief in God's Providence incite us? It should incite us to have confidence in God.

69. But is it sufficient to confide in God? No; we must work also with Him.

70. If you are sick, for instance, is it sufficient to think that God will help you? No; I must help too.

71. How can you help on your part? By calling in the doctor, and using the remedies he prescribes.

72. But if God orders and directs all things in the world, why, then, is there so much evil done? Does He will it? No, God wills not the evil; but He permits it.

73. Why does God not will the evil? Why can He not will it? Because God is holy.

74. Why does God permit evil, as by virtue of His omnipotence He can prevent it? God permits the evil in the world: 1. Because He has created man free, and, 2. Because He knows also how to turn evil into good.

75. What can man do by virtue of his free will? He can choose either good or evil.

76. If man were obliged to be good, what would the good not have for him? It would have no merit for him.

77. And if it had no merit for him? God could not reward it.

78. How is it possible that God can turn evil into good? By His omnipotence and wisdom.

79. How can you prove this to me? From the history of Joseph in Egypt.

80. If God takes care of all things, why is there so much suffering and affliction in the world? 1. That the sinner may mend his ways and not perish forever. 2. That the just man may more abound in merits, and thus obtain a greater reward in Heaven.

81. How may we divide the sufferings which God sends us? They may be divided into merited and unmerited sufferings.

82. Who meets with merited sufferings? Wicked men—sinners.

83. Who meets with unmerited sufferings? Good men—the just.

84. Why does God send sufferings to wicked men? That they may amend and not be lost forever.

85. What would happen if God sent no sufferings to wicked men? They would go on in wickedness and be lost eternally.

86. With what then may we compare the sufferings which God sends sinners? To a bitter medicine.

87. Now when God sends sufferings and afflictions to other people, have we the right to consider it as a punishment upon them? No; we have not this right.

88. Why not? Because we do not know who is deserving of punishment.

89. Why does God send sufferings to the just man? God wishes to try him, and make him abound in merits.

90. Name two good men in the Old Testament to whom God sent great afflictions? Job and Tobias.

91. What must we do when God sends us sufferings, and we must acknowledge that we have deserved them on account of our sins? We should make a firm resolution to amend.

92. But if we have to suffer in an unmerited way, what should we do then? We should think that God wishes to try us.

93. For what purpose does God send a common suffering by which whole nations undergo war, famine, infectious diseases, etc.? For the good of mankind.

94. What is the moral of all this? Never presume to murmur or complain at the dispensations of Providence, for God knows best what is for our salvation.

Never, then, give way to discouragement! If sufferings envelop you like the waves of the sea, you must not forget what you have learned to-day in the religious instruction: to put your confidence in God. A lively faith should always abide with you; God can help you, He wishes to help you, and He will help you when the time comes. Say with St. Augustine, "Cut, burn, crucify me, only spare me in eternity."

XVII.

Of the Angels.

Dear Children:—In the last lesson we heard that God was the Creator of the visible and invisible world. To the visible world belong those creatures of God which we can see and which we can perceive by the other senses. But there is also an invisible world, i. e., creatures of God which we can not see, nor perceive with the other senses, namely, innumerable spirits called angels. The word angel signifies in general a messenger, or ambassador of God. Certainly in many parts of Holy Scripture the word angel is used in another sense; but in the proper sense we understand by angel those immortal spirits, which are the noblest of God's creatures, dwell in His heavenly glory, and participate in His blessedness. They are spirits because they are equipped with reason, understanding,

and free will, but they have no visible body. They are innumerable because in different parts of Holy Scripture there are legions of them spoken of. Jesus Himself says, "If I should ask my Father, he would send a legion of angels to my assistance." In the Old Testament the prophet Daniel says, "A thousand times a thousand waited upon him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him." The existence of angels, however, is not only proved by Holy Scripture, but also by the visible appearance of angels. An angel appeared to Lot, and said to him, "Arise, take thy wife and thy two daughters, that you may not perish also with the sinful city." The angel of the Lord came to Elias, touched him, and said, "Arise and eat."

The young Tobias was accompanied by an angel on the journey. An angel announced to Zacharias in the Holy of Holies that his prayer for a son had been granted. An angel brought the message to Mary that she would become the mother of God. At the tomb of Jesus an angel said to the weeping women, "Be not afraid." Angels appeared to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem and announced to them the birth of Jesus. In the garden of Olives an angel strengthened the Saviour in His agony. Peter, who was bound with chains in a dungeon, was delivered by an angel.

In what state were the angels when God had created them? They were all good and happy, and endowed with excellent gifts. The angels were created and destined to participate in the Divine glory, to praise God, and to be blessed in His vision; they must, therefore, have been good and happy.

The glorious gifts with which God has endowed them are: 1. Their supreme knowledge of God; 2. Their ardent love of God; and 3. Their prompt and joyful obedience.

The angels, however, in regard to their perfection, are not all equal to one another. Therefore, we distinguish nine choirs of blessed spirits, namely: 1. Angels; 2. Archangels; 3. Virtues; 4. Powers; 5. Principalities; 6. Dominations; 7. Thrones; 8. Cherubim; 9. Seraphim.

Angels are generally portrayed:

1. In human form. The heavenly princes assume the human form. That signifies their humility.

2. With wings. This indicates their ready obedience.

3. In a kneeling and praying attitude. This signifies their love of mankind, for whom they unceasingly pray and intercede.

4. In white raiment. This indicates their innocence and spotlessness.

Did the angels all remain good and happy? No, many rebelled against God and were hurled into hell. These are called devils or evil spirits. The angels received at their creation, besides the other glorious gifts, also freedom of will, and of their own free choice were to be made worthy of blessedness. God placed them in the state of probation, but they did not all stand this probation. Many misused their freedom, and fell away from God. As a punishment for their sin, they were cast by God into hell, as appears from Holy Scripture, "God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell unto torments" (II. Peter ii. 4). The name given to the chief of the devils is Satan. "How are the good angels affected toward us?" "The good angels love us, therefore they protect us in soul and body, pray for us, and exhort us to do good."

I. They protect us in soul and body. We are, for instance, at all times exposed to many dangers, even bodily dangers, whereby our life may be imperilled, and to dangers of the soul, whereby we are tempted to sin. Our holy religion teaches us that the angels stand by our side to protect us in all dangers. Holy Scripture says, "He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. xc. 11). Already in the Old Law we find this protecting angel spoken of. Poor Agar's son was on the point of fainting. Then God sent an angel; Agar beheld a spring of water and gave the boy to drink. Angels rescued Lot from a horrible death by burning in the city of Sodom. Elias the prophet was obliged to flee into the desert away from Jezabel, where he was in danger of starvation. Then an angel of the Lord brought him food, and said, "Arise and eat!" The three youths in the fiery furnace were preserved from the flames by an angel of the Lord. Angels delivered the Apostles from the dungeon.

The angels take far greater care of our souls than of our bodies. Our soul is destined for heaven and eternal happiness. Our soul is one day to participate in the blessedness and vision of God. Therefore, they watch over us, that "the child of malice," the tempter, may not injure us; for they desire nothing more ardently than that we too, like themselves, may be happy and blessed. St. Agnes was a girl of thirteen years. She was required to sacrifice to idols; but nothing could move her to deny her Christian faith. By

the assistance of her guardian angel she was enabled steadfastly to resist all temptations, and she cried out to her tormentors, "Depart from me, my guardian angel stands by my side."

II. They pray for us, and because they are God's friends, and stand around His throne; it is certain that God will hear their prayers.

III. They exhort us to do good. As often as temptation approaches us, as often as the evil spirit tries to ensnare us in his toils, so often do they exhort us to shun evil. And as often as the opportunity occurs for us to do good, they speak to us encouragingly. Thus did the angels encourage the Apostles, "Go in, step up and speak to the people in the temple the word of life." When we have sinned, the angels exhort us in particular to do penance so as to save our soul from perdition. The angels who are specially given to man for his protection are called guardian angels. The Catechism also teaches us what we owe to our holy guardian angels. "We must venerate them with great devotion, be thankful to them, and readily follow their admonitions." Children can show their veneration and gratitude toward their holy guardian angels, by praying to them frequently and devoutly. Let every child take care that his guardian angel is not obliged to turn sorrowfully away from him. As long as you venerate and obey your holy guardian angel, he will be your friend, your protector, and your advocate. The good angels are opposed to the bad ones. Our holy religion teaches us of the bad angels that, through hatred and envy, they lay snares for us, to plunge us into eternal perdition. This is proved by the tempting of our first parents in Paradise. In their envy they could not bear to see how happy our first parents were. The devil ensnared them with lies and deceit, and in this manner brought about the fall of God's image. "Why does God permit the wicked angels to lay snares for us?" He permits it because He knows how to make their snares serve unto His own honor and to the salvation of souls."

The temptations and snares of the evil one exhort and incite us to vigilance.

Therefore the Apostle says, "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour" (I. Peter v. 8). As the lion watches for his prey and thirsts for blood, so do the evil spirits watch for their victims amongst men. This exhorts you to vigilance and prayer, for Jesus says, "Watch and pray, that you may not fall into temptation."

The Apostle St. James writes, "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you" (James iv. 7).

But above all things we must know and believe that the evil spirits have no power over us, unless we ourselves give it to them.

Holy Scripture says, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" We must, therefore, be steadfast and persevere in our combat with evil. "Whosoever perseveres unto the end shall be saved."

In conclusion, I must tell you that man can become either like a good or evil spirit. Man resembles the good spirits when he imitates their good qualities; when he loves God as fervently and obeys Him as readily and promptly as the angels do in heaven. Furthermore, when we strive to be an angel to our fellowmen, when we pray for them, when we exhort them to do good, and warn and restrain them from evil; in particular, when we are a guardian angel to children. See, children, many of you must have a little brother or sister to take care of. You will become thereby the visible guardian angel, as it were, of your little brothers and sisters. We can also imitate the evil spirits. Those who hate God instead of loving Him, who revolt against Him and commit sin, who hate their fellow creatures and strive to injure them, and lead and tempt others into sin, they are devils in human form. We ought to shudder at this fearful thought, a devil in human form.

Application: Remember daily your holy guardian angel and recommend yourself to him in all dangers of soul and body. Avoid saying or doing anything contrary to holy modesty in his presence. In commemoration of this beautiful doctrine, that every one has received a guardian angel from God, we celebrate the Feast of the Guardian Angels. We should recommend ourselves particularly on this feast to our holy guardian angels. What an elevating and consoling thought it is for us that an angel accompanies us and protects us in a visible manner; that a heavenly being stands at our bedside and guards us! We will repeat the lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the angels.
2. What does the word angel mean in general? It means a messenger or ambassador of God.
3. Where do they dwell? In heaven.
4. In what do they participate? In God's blessedness.

5. In what way are the angels distinguished from God? 1. In that they are creatures of God, and that they had a beginning.

6. In what other way? Because they are not as perfect as God.

7. With what has God endowed them? With reason and free will.

8. But what have they not got? They have no body.

9. Why have they no body? Because they are pure spirits.

10. How many angels are there? Their number is legion.

11. How can you prove this? From Holy Scripture.

12. Give me the passage from Holy Scripture? Jesus said, "If I should ask my heavenly Father He would send me more than twelve legions of angels."

13. What did Jesus mean by these words? Jesus meant that there were innumerable angels.

14. Give me a verse from the Old Testament? It is said in the Prophet Daniel: "A thousand times a thousand waited upon him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him."

15. In what other way is the existence of the angels still further attested? By the visible appearances of angels.

16. To whom did angels appear first in the old law? To Lot.

17. What did they say to him? "Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters with thee, that thou mayst not perish with the sinful city."

18. What city was it? The city of Sodom.

19. What befell this sinful city? Fire and brimstone fell from heaven and consumed it.

20. But what happened to Lot and his family? They were saved by angels.

21. To whom else did angels appear? To Abraham.

22. To whom else? The Prophet Elias.

23. Who was accompanied on the journey by an angel? The young Tobias.

24. Who had an angelic apparition in the Temple? The high priest Zacharias.

25. What did the angel announce to him? That his prayer for a son had been granted.

26. To whom did angels appear in the New Testament? The archangel Gabriel brought the message to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to be the Mother of God.

27. To whom else? To the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem the angels announced the birth of Jesus.

28. Who strengthened our Divine Saviour in the Garden of Olives? An angel.

29. By whom was St. Peter delivered from chains and dungeon? By an angel.

30. Does the belief in the existence of angels permit of denial or doubting? No; it can neither be denied nor doubted.

31. In what state were the angels when God had created them? They were all good and happy, and endowed with excellent gifts.

32. For what purpose did God create and destine the angels? That they might participate in the blessedness of God.

33. Which were the excellent gifts with which God endowed them? 1. Their supreme knowledge of God. 2. Their ardent love of God, and, 3. Their joyful and prompt obedience.

34. Are the angels equal to one another in respect to their perfections? No; they are not all equal.

35. How do we divide the holy spirits? Into nine choirs.

36. Of what does the word 'choir" remind us? That there are very many of them.

37. And of what else? That they proclaim the praises of God.

38. What are these nine choirs of blessed spirits called? 1. Angels. 2. Archangels. 3. Virtues. 4. Powers. 5. Principalities. 6. Dominations. 7. Thrones. 8. Cherubim. 9. Seraphim.

39. How are angels generally portrayed for us human beings? In human form.

40. What does that signify? Their humility.

41. Why? Because being heavenly princes and messengers they assume the human form.

42. In what other way are they represented? With wings.

43. What does that signify? Their quick and ready obedience.

44. In what attitude are they usually portrayed? In a kneeling and praying position.

45. Why is this? Because they worship God incessantly and pray for us.

46. Why are they represented in white raiment? To put before us their innocence and purity.

47. Did the angels all remain good and happy? No; many rebelled against God and were hurled into hell. They are called devils—evil spirits.

48. How was it possible that angels could sin? At their creation they received from God free will.

49. How did a part of the angels misuse this? For evil.

50. What was their punishment? They were hurled into hell.

51. What does Holy Scripture say of the punishment of the bad angels? "God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes, to the lower hell, into torments."

52. How are the good angels affected toward us? The good angels love us, therefore they protect us in soul and body, pray for us, and exhort us to do good.

53. What are bodily dangers? Those dangers whereby our body, our life, our health may be injured.

54. What are dangers of the soul? Dangers of the soul are temptations to evil.

55. Who tempts us to evil? The evil spirit, bad companions, and our own sensual desires.

56. Which dangers are the greatest, those of the body or of the soul? The dangers of the soul.

57. Why? Because by sin we lose God's grace and eternal happiness.

58. By which passage of Scripture can you prove that the angels were destined to protect mankind? Holy Scripture says: "He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

59. Has the intercession of the angels great power with God? Yes; it has great power.

60. Why? Because they are friends of God.

61. What else do the angels do for us? They exhort us to do good.

62. Why do they do this? Because they wish us to be holy and blessed as they are.

63. What are those angels called who are given to man for his personal protection? They are called guardian angels.

64. How are guardian angels usually represented? As an angel leading a child by the hand.

65. Have, then, only little children guardian angels? No; every human being has a guardian angel.

66. If we let our holy guardian angel lead us, where will he lead us to? To heaven.

67. What is our duty toward our holy angel guardian? We should venerate him with great devotion, be thankful to him, and readily follow his admonitions.

68. What day is set apart for the veneration of our holy guardian angels? The Feast of the Guardian Angels.

69. Who is opposed to the good angels? The wicked angels.

70. How are the fallen or wicked angels affected toward us? They lay snares for us, through hatred and envy, to plunge us into eternal perdition.

71. How can you prove to me that the bad angels seek to plunge mankind into perdition? By our first parents.

72. To what did the evil spirit have recourse to destroy them? To lying and deceit.

73. What false promise did he make to them? He promised them that they should be like to God.

74. Why does God permit the wicked angels to lay snares for us? He permits it because He knows how to make their snares serve unto His own honor and to the salvation of men.

75. What do we know of Jesus Himself in the desert? That He was tempted three times by Satan.

76. To what should the snares of the evil spirit incite us? They should incite us to vigilance and prayer.

77. What does Holy Scripture say for this reason? "Watch and pray, that you may not fall into temptation."

78. What does Holy Scripture say of Satan's snares? "The devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

79. How then can we escape the snares of the devil? By vigilance and prayer.

80. By what else? By invoking the Holy Name of Jesus.

81. What are the words of St. James? "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you."

82. When have the evil spirits power over us? When we yield ourselves up to them.

83. How is this done? By sin and vice.

84. By what passage of Scripture can you prove to me that the evil spirits have no power over us when we place our confidence in God? Holy Scripture says: "If God is for us, who can be against us!"

85. Can we also become like unto the angels? Yes; we can resemble angels.

86. Which angels can we become like? We can resemble the good or bad angels.

87. How can we resemble good angels? By imitating their good qualities.

88. How are we to do this? We should love God and man as well as the angels do, and obey God as readily as the angels do.

89. How do we imitate the bad angels? By revolting against God, by committing sin, and tempting others to evil.

90. What punishment awaits those who imitate the bad angels? The pains of hell.

91. How often should you venerate your holy guardian angel? Daily, at morning and evening prayers.

92. What should we do at our morning and night prayers? We should always recommend ourselves to our holy guardian angel that he may protect us in all dangers of soul and body.

93. Of what should we be very careful? We should be very careful not to do anything in his presence against holy modesty.

Never forget, then, that God has placed a protecting angel at your side. This should encourage you to have great confidence in your guardian angel. The thought of him will also restrain you from evil; for if we are ashamed to do wrong in the presence of any one, how much more ought we to fear sinning in the presence of our guardian angel. Endeavor to become as good and as pure as your guardian angel. Never forget that it is the wish of the holy angels that you also should come there where they already are, to the abode of everlasting peace.

XVIII.

Of our First Parents and their Fall.

Dear Children:—Our religious instruction for to-day is on our first parents and their fall. We have already heard that God has created a visible and invisible world. To the visible world belong all those creatures of God which we see, or are aware of with our other senses; in a word, the corporeal or material world. On the other hand, those creatures belong to the invisible world which we can not see or perceive with our senses, because they are spirits. Amongst the creatures of the visible world, man is placed the highest. To the question, "Which is the noblest of God's creatures upon earth?" the catechism makes answer, man.

Man is called the noblest of God's creatures upon earth because God has endowed him with such prerogatives that he is exalted above all other creatures of earth. Even in his body God has distinguished man by particular prerogatives. The bodies of animals, for instance, are turned toward the ground, but man stands there upright. He looks up to heaven, whence he originates, and for which he is destined. Whilst the animals are either entirely dumb, or can only emit inarticulate sounds, man has the prerogative of speech, with which he can communicate his thoughts and feelings to others by intelligible words. God Himself placed man as

ruler over the earth and other visible creatures when He said to him, "Rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth" (Gen. i. 28).

But the prerogatives of the soul are far greater than those of the body. What were our first parents called? They were called Adam and Eve.

They were the first human beings, because there were none before them. God Himself named them; Adam really means "man of the earth," because God formed him out of the earth; and Eve means "mother of the living," because all mankind descend from her.

How did God make the first man? "God formed a body of the slime of the earth, and breathed an immortal soul into it, and the first man was made" (Gen. ii. 7). This has a profound significance.

God formed the body of the first man from the earth to remind us that we are one day to return again to dust and earth in the grave. This admonishes all men to humility, particularly those who think a great deal of their beauty and are so proud of it. These persons should think of the rose, which blooms to-day and to-morrow is withered.

The soul of man, however, is, as it were, God's breath, a part of the Divine nature. This circumstance obliges us to strive not only to preserve the purity of our soul, but to become more and more like to God.

Of what did God form Eve? Of a rib of Adam, whilst he was sleeping.

God wished hereby to teach Adam that he should look upon Eve as part of himself, and that he should be of one heart and of one soul with her.

How did God distinguish man at his creation from all other creatures? "By creating him to his own image" (Gen. i. 27).

When a child resembles its father or mother, people say, "It is the image of its father or mother." If, therefore, man is to be distinguished as an image of God, he must have something about him which makes him like unto God. Man can not be like God with regard to his body, because God has no body. Man, therefore, must resemble God in his soul. Holy Scripture affords us a proof that the first man was made to the image of God. God said, "Let us make man to our image and likeness" (Gen. i. 26). How was the first man the image of God? By this, that he was endowed with natural and supernatural gifts, which made him resemble God.

Amongst these natural gifts, we understand those which belong to the completeness of our human nature, which God endowed us with when He created us. To these natural gifts belong, in the first place, body and soul, our five senses, and the powers of the soul, understanding, reason, and free will.

By supernatural gifts, on the contrary, we understand those Divine gifts which we do not possess naturally, which do not proceed from or have their origin in the same. These are for us, therefore, particular gifts of grace granted by God to lead us to a more exalted communion with Him, i. e., to holiness and righteousness.

The Catechism asks further: In what do the natural gifts consist? Answer: Especially in this, that the human soul is (1) an immortal spirit, (2) endowed with understanding, reason, and free will.

1. The soul is a spirit; that is to say, an invisible, bodiless being. This being is immortal, which means that it can never die; its existence has no end. Holy Scripture says, "God created man immortal, according to the image which is His likeness He created him." Unfortunately the unbelievers of these days, of which there are very many, maintain that man's soul dies with his body. These men place themselves on a level with, and live and die like animals.

2. Man's soul is endowed by God with understanding, memory, and free will. With understanding, man knows and can think, and lift himself up to God and the supernatural; because of his free will he is able to will and to desire. Free will is necessary to man, for if the freedom of man's will was withdrawn, we should have to admit that God compelled him to do good. Now, if he were forced by God to do good, there would be no merit for him. God can not force men to evil, because He is holy.

In what did the supernatural gifts consist? Especially in this: that the first man

1. Possessed sanctifying grace.

2. That in in him the senses never rebelled; and

3. That he was never to be subject to hardships and sufferings, nor to death.

1. Man possessed originally sanctifying grace, i. e., he was pure, holy, innocent, righteous, unspotted, and pleasing to God; he was a child and an heir of God.

2. Man was never tempted by bad desires. Man's desires and inclinations were uncorrupted; they were subject to the soul, and the

soul was subject to God. The understanding knew God, and the will only desired that which was right and good. Man's whole spiritual life was directed to God; it sought its joys and happiness in God alone. It lived wholly for God and in God.

3. Man was never to be subjected to hardships and sufferings, nor to death. He was neither to know nor feel the hardships of human life; hunger and thirst, heat and cold, want and privation, fatigue and sleepiness, sicknesses and misfortunes. Even in respect to his body he was to be immortal, and not subject to death.

Did our first parents always preserve these supernatural gifts? No. By the sin which they committed they lost all their supernatural gifts, thereby plunging themselves and the whole human race into the greatest misery. When we possess a precious thing, and know its value, we are very careful not to lose it. Adam and Eve did not do this. They transgressed God's commandment, ate of the forbidden fruit, and lost thereby, not only their own supernatural gifts, but plunged themselves and their descendants into the greatest misery. What sin did they commit? They believed the serpent more than God, and they ate of the forbidden fruit. God had revealed His will expressly to our first parents, and said to them, "Eat of all the trees in the garden, but of that tree in the middle of the garden thou shalt not eat. If thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." But the evil spirit said to them, "You will not die, you will become like unto God." Adam and Eve allowed themselves to be deceived by the evil spirit, and ate of the forbidden fruit. This sin of our first parents was a crime against gratitude and obedience. Man owed gratitude to God for the great prerogatives with which he was endowed, and as God was his creator and Lord, he owed Him obedience also. But they set aside everything, rebelled against God, and transgressed His holy commandment.

In what does the misery consist into which our first parents have plunged the whole human race? In this: that sin, with its fatal consequences, has passed from Adam to all mankind, insomuch that we now all come into this world infected with sin. Holy Scripture says, "By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin, death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). The fault, as well as the punishment, of the first sin is inherited continually from the first man created unto the last.

What do we call this sin in which we are all born? We call

it original sin, because we have not actually committed it, but have, as it were, inherited it from our first parents, who were the origin or source of all mankind.

For Adam and Eve the first sin was an actual or personal sin, because they committed it in person. But for us it is an inherited sin, because we did not commit that sin in person. Every human being, therefore, at his birth finds himself in a state of original sin, i. e., he comes into the world infected with original sin, and only by the merits of Jesus Christ can he be purified from original sin in Holy Baptism. As children not only inherit their parents' fortune but their debts also, so did our first parents transmit to us the sad legacy of original sin.

What fatal consequences have, with original sin, passed to all men?

1. Their disgrace with God, and at the same time their loss of the sonship of God, and of the right of inheriting the kingdom of heaven.

2. Ignorance, concupiscence, and proneness to evil.

3. All sorts of hardships, pains, calamities, and at last death.

1. By disgrace, we understand the displeasure of God; for by virtue of His sanctity, God is pleased with good and displeased with evil. It is a loss when, either through our own fault or that of another, we lose something valuable. The precious possessions which were lost by the first sin were (1) the grace of God, and (2) the heirship to the kingdom of heaven. By sin our first parents separated themselves from God, passed out of communion with Him, lost the good will and the sonship of God, and with it the inheritance to the kingdom of heaven, because anything unholy and sinful can not be united with God.

2. Ignorance, concupiscence, and proneness to evil. Whilst before their sin God granted to our first parents a more exalted knowledge of Himself, after sinning they were ignorant of the most important truths of salvation. Whilst our first parents before sinning willed only good, after their sin their desires and inclinations were prone to evil. Although man's free will was not lost by sin, still it was weakened and inclined to evil.

3. All sorts of hardships, pains, calamities, and at last death. Although before sin Paradise produced of itself everything that our first parents required, still after their sin they had to earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. Whilst before sin earth was a paradise

to them, after sin it was a place of tribulation and suffering. Whilst before sin they led a joyful life in union with God, after sin they were subjected to all the hardships of human life, hunger and privation, heat and cold, sicknesses and sufferings, and even death. As a terrific storm lays waste the interior of a beautiful garden, as a senseless barbarian destroys a work of art, thus was the image of God destroyed in our first parents, and their paradise was ravaged. The consequences of the first sin were so great that they not only reached man, but extended to the earth. God said to Adam, "Cursed is the earth in thy work; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread."

The whole earthly creation participated in the curse of the first sin, which to-day still burdens the earth. What would have become of man if God had not shown him mercy?

No one could have received grace and been saved. After the fall man was dead spiritually; he could not help himself, nor by his own power return to his former state of grace. Like a branch cut off from the grapevine, man was separated from God. Besides which he owed satisfaction, which he could not make, to the Divine justice for the sin committed. Beyond help, as if in a deep abyss, which offered no escape, helpless as a ship that has lost its anchor, sails, and masts, so was man irretrievably lost if God had not taken pity upon him.

How did God show mercy to man? "He promised him a Saviour, who, by a full satisfaction, should take sin away from him, and regain for him grace and the right of inheriting the kingdom of heaven" (Gen. iii. 15). God wished to reveal to man in the most excellent manner not only His power in the creation and His justice in the punishment, but also His mercy and goodness by the promise of a Redeemer. He promised man, therefore, a Redeemer who would make amends for the harm done by sin, and render complete satisfaction to the outraged majesty of God, restore the disfigured image of God in man, illumine again the obscured understanding, fortify the enfeebled will, raise up again fallen man, and thereby destroy the kingdom of sin.

What was the destiny of those just persons who lived before the coming of Christ? They had indeed merited heaven by their faith, and their good works, but they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven *before* the Redeemer, but only *with* Him.

Original sin, which had such fatal consequences for mankind, admonishes us to avoid every sin, and to resist every temptation to evil. If man was so severely punished for transgressing the Divine commandment only once, how severely will not those persons be punished who sin against God daily and often frequently during the day? Adam and Eve would not have sinned if they had fled before the tempter, and not believed his words. We will now pass to the repetition of the lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of our first parents and their fall.
2. Name the noblest creature of God upon earth? Man.
3. Why is man a creature? Because he was created by God.
4. Why is man the noblest of all creatures? Because God has granted him certain prerogatives which place him above all other creatures.
5. We have heard that man is endowed with special prerogatives; how are these divided? Into interior and exterior ones.
6. Name an exterior prerogative of man? His walking upright.
7. How do animals walk? They walk with their faces turned toward the ground.
8. Mention another exterior prerogative of man? Speech.
9. What can man do by means of speech? He can communicate his houghts to others.
10. How is it with animals? They are either quite dumb, or else they utter inarticulate sounds.
11. What did God do at man's creation? God made him master of the world.
12. Prove this from Holy Scripture? God said to Adam: "Rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth."
13. How were our first parents called? God called them Adam and Eve.
14. What does the word Adam mean? It means man of earth.
15. Why did God give him this name? Because his body was formed out of the earth.
16. What does the name Eve mean? It means mother of the living.
17. Why did God give her this name? Because all mankind descends from her.
18. How did God create the first man Adam? God formed a body of the slime of the earth and breathed an immortal soul into it, and the first man was made.
19. Why did God form the body of the first man from the earth? To remind mankind that in the grave they will return again to dust and earth.
20. Why did God breathe an immortal soul into him? To remind mankind that the immortal soul is God's breath, a part of God, as it were.
21. How did God distinguish man at his creation? By creating him to His own image.

22. How was the first man the image of God? 1. By the natural, and, 2. By the supernatural gifts which made him resemble God.

23. In what do the natural gifts consist? Especially in this: that the human soul is an immortal spirit endowed with understanding and free will.

24. Why is the soul of man a spirit? Because it is an invisible being without a body.

25. Why is the human soul an immortal spirit? Because it can never die.

26. With what natural gifts has God endowed man's soul? With understanding, reason, and free will.

27. What can man do with his understanding? He can know God.

28. What can he do with his reason? He can think and lift himself up to God.

29. What can man do with his free will? With his free will he can choose for himself.

30. In what did the supernatural gifts consist? Especially in this: that the first man possessed, 1. Sanctifying grace. 2. His senses never rebelled against reason. 3. That he was never to be subjected to hardships and sufferings, nor to death.

31. What means man possessed sanctifying grace? It means: man was holy, innocent, just, unspotted, and pleasing to God.

32. What was man in this state? He was a child of God.

33. What besides? An heir of God.

34. To what had he a right, a claim? To the kingdom of heaven.

35. For what was he destined? To participate in the happiness of God in heaven.

36. What was the second supernatural gift? That man's senses never rebelled against reason.

37. What tempts man to evil? His sensual desires and inclinations.

38. How then were the desires and inclinations of our first parents? They were uncorrupted.

39. Toward what were they directed? Only to good.

40. To what were the desires and inclinations subject? They were subject to the soul.

41. And to whom was the soul subject? To God.

42. What was the third supernatural gift? Man should never be subjected to hardships, sufferings, or death.

43. To what hardships is man subjected upon earth? Hunger and thirst, heat and cold, want and privation, trouble, sicknesses, and sufferings of all sorts.

44. To what may we compare these supernatural gifts? To a great treasure.

45. Did our first parents preserve these supernatural gifts? No; by the sin which they committed they lost them and plunged themselves and the whole human race into the greatest misery.

46. What sin did our first parents commit? Sin of disobedience.

47. What were the consequences of their sin? Their sin plunged them and the whole human race into the greatest misery.

48. How can you prove this to me? By a passage of Holy Scripture which says: "By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12).

49. What obligations did our first parents violate by their sin? Those of gratitude and obedience.

50. What, then, did they do instead of showing gratitude and obedience to God? They rebelled against Him and sinned.

51. What descends from our first parents upon all men? The fault and the punishment of the first sin.

52. What then does every man bring with him at his birth into this world? Original sin.

53. Can original sin be removed from us? Yes; by the merits of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of Baptism.

54. Why did man lose the love of God by sin? Because God is holy and can not love anything wicked.

55. Why did we lose the sonship of God by sin? Because a sinner can not be a child of God.

56. When any one ceases to be a child of God, what else does he lose? The inheritance of the kingdom of heaven.

57. What was the second consequence of the first sin which has descended upon all mankind? Ignorance, concupiscence, and proneness to evil.

58. What means: Ignorance is a consequence of original sin? It means: that the great knowledge of God which had been granted to man before the fall was lost by sin.

59. What was united to this ignorance? Concupiscence and proneness to evil.

60. What is meant thereby? The inclination and desire to sin.

61. What is the third consequence of original sin? All sorts of hardships, sufferings, calamities, and death.

62. Did our first parents not suffer hunger before the fall? No; for paradise produced everything which they needed.

63. Did they know any suffering or trouble? No; for paradise was a place of delight and happiness.

64. What other calamity has sin brought upon man? Death.

65. To what may we compare the sin of our first parents? To a violent storm that ravages a beautiful garden.

66. Were the consequences of the first sin inflicted upon man only? No; they were also inflicted upon the whole earth.

67. How can you give a proof of this? God said: "Cursed is the earth in thy work; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread."

68. Why did God punish our first parents so severely for their sin? Because He is just.

69. Who took pity upon fallen man? God took pity upon him.

70. How did God show mercy to man? By promising him a Redeemer.

71. Which of God's attributes do we perceive by His showing mercy to fallen man? We perceive thereby His great goodness toward mankind.

72. Which attitude did God demonstrate by the creation? His omnipotence.

73. Which attribute did God show in His punishment of the first sin? His justice.

74. What admonition does the lesson of the first sin give us? To avoid sin.

75. How often did Adam and Eve sin in paradise? They sinned only once.

76. Who tempted Adam and Eve to sin? The evil spirit.

77. In what way did he tempt them? By lying.

78. What good lesson should you draw from this? To flee the tempter and not to believe his lies.

XIX.

From the Fall of Adam to the Coming of the Redeemer.

Dear Children:—In the last instruction we spoke of the fall of our first parents. When our first parents, Adam and Eve, after their sin, appreciated their wrong, their disobedience, and their revolt against God, and were frightened at it, afraid and ashamed, God took compassion upon them and promised them a Redeemer. The words of the Divine promise ran thus, "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (Gen. iii. 15).

Jesus Christ, the promised Redeemer, is meant as the one who will crush the evil spirit. Hence the catechism asks the question, "To whom did God first promise a Redeemer?" "To our first parents immediately after the fall."

Did man show his gratitude to the Lord God for His mercy? No; Adam's first born, Cain, turned away from God and killed his good brother, Abel.

Although Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise, still they were not quite forsaken by God; they lived a devout life in the consciousness of their guilt, and in an ardent desire to propitiate their offended God. To them were born two sons, Cain and Abel. Abel led a life pleasing to God, but in Cain evil dwelt. Now each one offered a sacrifice to God. Cain offered up the fruits of his fields, and Abel the firstlings of his flock. But God looked down with pleasure upon Abel's sacrifice; He did not look at Cain's. Then Cain became very angry and his face was full of envy and hatred. God warned him, and said, "Why art thou angry? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? But the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it" (Gen. iv. 6, 7).

Cain did not obey God, and kept the anger in his heart. One day Cain behaved kindly toward his brother, and persuaded him to go with him into the field. Now when Cain was far enough from his parents' house, he murdered his good brother Abel. But another son was born to our first parents, whom they named Seth, and he too had a son called Enos.

How did Cain's descendants live?

They lived an ungodly life, as their father had, and led the good people gradually astray so that nearly all became ungodly. Cain's descendants were called the children of men, but the descendants of Seth were called the children of God. Cain's descendants led a sensual and godless life, were slaves of impurity and to all passions, and led even Seth's descendants into evil. Now when the wickedness of mankind had reached its height and only one family, which was that of the good Noe, walked in the fear of the Lord, God determined to wipe out the human race from the face of the earth. Still He did not do this at once, but gave them yet time, one hundred and twenty years, but commanded Noe to build an ark (to be, as it were, a continual penitential sermon to mankind). But when this time also had elapsed without mankind having amended their ways, the chastisement of God at last descended upon them. By a great flood of water every one was destroyed, with the exception of the good Noe and his family, his wife, his sons, and their wives. This great inundation remained upon the earth for one hundred and fifty days. In thanksgiving for his miraculous escape, Noe offered up a sacrifice to the Lord, and the Lord was pleased with this sacrifice, saying, "In future there shall be no more flood to efface the earth. All the days of the seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, night and day, shall not cease" (Gen. viii. 22). God blessed Noe and his sons and said to them, "Increase and multiply, and fill the earth." He placed him again as ruler over the creatures of the earth, gave them commandments, and established a covenant with them, the sign of the same being a rainbow which he set in the clouds.

Did man remain faithful to God after the flood? No; he soon fell away again from God and worshiped the sun, and moon, men, and animals as well as images of wood and stone. Even one of Noe's sons, named Cham, showed great degeneracy, and Noe pronounced a curse upon him. After the flood, man spread more and more over the earth, but also forgot God, his Creator and Benefactor. Out of sheer arrogance the children of men wanted to build the tower of Babel, the summit of which was to reach up to heaven. God frustrated their undertaking by confusing their speech.

Did God finally abandon man to his wickedness as he deserved? No; God gave man, for the future Redeemer's sake, abundant gifts

for the salvation of his soul, and He admonished him in diverse ways to repent and amend.

God in His omnipotence could have destroyed the wicked; but He did not do this, but spared them for the sake of the promised Redeemer. These demonstrations of mercy were diverse. God exhorted them:

1. By the voice of conscience, which always admonished men to good and restrained them from evil.

2. By blessings in the natural kingdom, for instance, by abundant harvests, etc.

3. By chastisements. Thus, for instance, God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha by fire from heaven, thus He punished the stiff-necked Egyptians by a great plague, and exterminated entirely the idolatrous Canaanites.

4. By remarkable men, whom He raised up amongst them or sent to them to put a stop to sin. Such men were Job, Jonas, and Daniel. Jonas was sent to Ninive to preach penance, and Daniel was sent to the idolatrous Babylonians.

5. By the Israelites falling into captivity, being thus dispersed with their sacred books and writings amongst the heathen.

6. At times also by angels, dreams, and miraculous visions and events.

God revealed to King Pharao, for instance, in a dream, the seven fruitful and the seven unfruitful years. King Nabuchodonosor was moved by a dream which the prophet Daniel interpreted for him, to the knowledge of the true God.

King Balthassar, of Babylon, instructed by the wisdom of the prophet Daniel, read the destruction of himself and his kingdom in the writing of an invisible hand.

The pagan centurion, Cornelius, of Cesarea, received the message by an angel that his prayer was heard and the commission to let St. Peter come to him from Joppe.

A miraculous star announced the birth of the Saviour of the world to the Magi.

Mankind did not turn God's demonstrations of grace to their salvation.

What did God do, then, when men became worse and worse?

God elected a chosen people to receive the true faith and the hope of the Redeemer, and He made a covenant with them.

What had been received of the first Divine revelations had become, at those times, greatly corrupted, so that it was necessary to choose a particular people for the hope of the Redeemer and the belief in one true God. To this end God made a covenant with the Jewish, or Israelitish people. The name "Jewish people, or "Jews," comes from Juda, who was one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The name "Israelitish people," or "Israelites," comes from Jacob, who was also called "Israel." God allowed this people to be specially instructed, led, and governed, and was as fond of them as a father is of his child, so as to keep the truth intact, at least, with one nation that He might fulfil His promises to them, and reveal His mercies.

In what did this covenant consist?

In this: 1. That God gave the promise to the Israelites that He would especially protect them as His chosen people, and bless them, and from them should proceed the Redeemer. 2. That the Israelites, on their part, vowed that they would at all times adore the one true God, and faithfully observe all His commandments.

By a covenant is understood a solemn promise made mutually by two or more persons. God made a twofold promise to the Israelites; and in the same way they made a twofold promise to Him.

How did God preserve the true faith and the hope of a Redeemer amongst the Israelitish people? God preserved these by means of holy men, by whom He revealed Himself to the people, and gave them His commandments and promises.

To reveal Himself anew to mankind, God made use of holy men. As He makes use of the parents that they may bring up the children, and as later He sent His Apostles that, through them, the Christian faith might be propagated upon earth, so also in the Old Law these devout and holy men were to be the teachers of the chosen people.

Can you name some of these men?

In the beginning they were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; later Moses, David, and the other prophets. First of all Abraham is mentioned.

Who was Abraham?

Abraham was the ancestor of the people of Israel, the first with whom God made a special covenant. Abraham was the son of a wealthy shepherd prince named Thare, and dwelt originally at Ur, in Chaldea. By a shepherd prince was understood in those days a very rich man, who possessed many great flocks, and possessed at the same time vast and fertile lands in which his flocks pastured. From

Ur Abraham went with Thare, his father, with Sara, his wife, and with Lot, the son of his brother, to Haran, where they dwelt for some time. At the express command of God, Abraham left his father's house and went to Chanaan. Lot, his brother's son, accompanied him. In the land of Chanaan Abraham came to Sichem, where God appeared and spoke to him. "Behold, this land will I give to thee!" During a famine Abraham went to Egypt, from whence he returned with Lot in the possession of vast flocks. As quarrels arose between his shepherds and Lot's in respect to the pasturage, Abraham separated from Lot in perfect peace and granted him the vicinity of Sodom, he himself remaining in Chanaan.

What remarkable events took place under Abraham?

1. The destruction of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrha. 2. The sacrifice of the good Isaac, and 3. That of the King Melchesidech. God had revealed to Abraham that He would destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha. Abraham interceded for the cities and God promised him that He would spare them if fifty just persons, or even ten, could be found within their walls. But alas! as these were not to be found, fire and brimstone descended from heaven and the ungodly cities were wiped out. Two angels appeared to Lot and rescued him.

God gave a son to Abraham in his old age, who was called Isaac. To try Abraham, God commanded him to take his only son Isaac up to Mount Moria and there to sacrifice him. With ready obedience Abraham took his son and two servants and set out upon the journey. Isaac carried the wood for the sacrifice himself. Arrived at the top of the mountain, Isaac laid himself upon the altar of sacrifice of his own free will. Abraham's hand was already uplifted, when an angel cried out from heaven, "Do not harm the boy, for now I see that thou dost fear God, and for His sake wouldst not have spared thine only son. Because thou hast done this I will bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed in all things. Thy children shall multiply as the stars of heaven, and through one of thy descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."

Isaac is the prototype of our Saviour Jesus Christ, because:

a. Abraham sacrified his only son Isaac and God sacrificed His only Son Jesus Christ.

b. Isaac carried the wood himself up the mountain for the sacrifice, Jesus Himself carried the cross upon which He was to die up to Mount Calvary.

c. Isaac did not complain when his father told him that he was to be the sacrificial lamb, and Jesus Christ died willingly for the sins of the world.

d. Abraham received great blessings from God on account of his obedience, so, too, did the death of Jesus upon the cross result in the most blessed consequences for mankind.

In the time of Abraham, the sacrifice of the King Melchisedech is also remarkable. Several kings had united together and declared war upon the king of Sodom and Gomorrha, in which Lot was taken prisoner and lost all his vast possessions. When Abraham heard this, he gathered his servants together, and with many allied kings, went in pursuit of the marauding victors, fell upon them by night, conquered them, and brought back his cousin Lot and everything which had been taken from him. On Abraham's return, Melchisedech, king of Salem, brought bread and wine, and blessing Abraham, said, "Blessed be Abraham in the most high God, who created heaven and earth, and praised be God in the highest by whose protection the enemy hath fallen into thy hands." By this action Melchisedech is the prototype of the priests of the New Law, because they offer up the holy sacrifice of the Mass under the forms of bread and wine.

We will now have a repetition of what we have gone through today, and we will continue this subject in our next lesson.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what did we speak in the last instruction? Of the fall of our first parents.

2. What did our first parents feel after their sin? They felt terror, shame and fear.

3. What would they have gladly done? They would gladly have become reconciled with God.

4. But could they do this of themselves? No, they could not do this alone.

5. What did God do on account of their contrition? He had compassion upon them.

6. In what way did He have compassion upon them? He promised them a Redeemer.

7. With what words did God promise a Redeemer to our first parents? God said to the serpent: "A descendant of the woman shall crush thy head."

8. What does this mean in other words? It means: "One of the woman's descendants shall take away thy power and conquer thee."

9. Who is this descendant? It is the promised Redeemer Jesus Christ.

10. To whom therefore did God first promise a Redeemer? To our first parents directly after the fall.

11. Did God also promise a Redeemer afterward to others? Yes; God promised the Redeemer to others also.

12. To whom for instance? To Abraham.

13. What did mankind owe to God for His mercy? They owed Him thanksgiving.

14. Did mankind prove grateful to God the Lord? "Cain even, Adam's first born, turned away from God and slew his brother Abel."

15. How many sons had Adam and Eve? They had two sons.

16. What were they called? Cain and Abel.

17. Were they both good? No; Cain was wicked, but Abel was good.

18. Which therefore did God love the most? God loved Abel the best.

19. How was this proved? At the first sacrifice.

20. In what way? God only took pleasure in Abel's sacrifice.

21. What did this produce in his brother Cain? It caused him to hate his brother Abel.

22. Who knew of Cain's hatred? God knew of it.

23. What did God do to make Cain better? He admonished him.

24. In what words? God said: Why art thou so angry and why is thy countenance fallen?

25. What did Cain do after this admonition from God? He did not amend and he retained the anger in his heart.

26. To what did Cain's wickedness finally lead him? It led him to murder his brother Abel.

27. Repeat briefly the story of "Cain's fratricide." (The pupil will repeat the story briefly.)

28. Was no other son born to our first parents? Yes; another son was born to them.

29. What was his name? He was called Seth.

30. What do we know of Seth's descendants? We know that they were good.

31. What were they called for that reason? They were called the children of God.

32. How did Cain's descendants live? They lived as ungodly as their father had done, and they gradually seduced the good also, until at last almost all had become godless.

33. What were Cain's descendants called on this account? They were called the children of men.

34. Who were the good whom they misled into evil? They were Seth's descendants.

35. What family walked in the fear of God and was not misled into evil? The family of the good Noe.

36. What did God determine to do with the corrupt human race? God determined to annihilate it.

37. Did God do this immediately? No, God first of all gave them time to be converted and amend.

38. How long a time did He give them? One hundred and twenty years.

39. By whom did God exhort them to conversion and amendment? By the pious Noe.

40. What did Noe have to do at God's command, so as to remind sinful men of their amendment? At God's command Noe had to build an "ark."

41. What is an ark? It is a large wooden structure like a ship.

42. Did mankind really amend? No, it did not.

43. How did God at last fulfil His threat? He caused an immense flood of water to burst forth, in which every one was lost with the exception of Noe and his family.

44. How many persons were there in Noe's family? Noe's family consisted of eight persons.

45. Can you name them to me? Noe, his wife, his three sons, and their wives.

46. How long did the waters cover the earth? The earth remained under water for one hundred and fifty days.

47. What did Noe do out of gratitude for his miraculous preservation? Noe erected an altar, and offered up a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord.

48. What promise did God make upon this occasion to Noe and his sons? God said: "As long as the earth lasts it shall not be destroyed again by a flood," etc.

49. What else did God do hereupon? God blessed them, and reinstated Noe as ruler over the creatures of the earth.

50. Did mankind remain faithful to God after the flood? No, they fell away from God again, and worshiped the sun and moon, men and animals, as well as images of wood and stone.

51. What is it called when instead of worshiping God men adore the sun and moon, animals, as well as images of stone and wood? It is called idolatry.

52. Which of Noe's three sons already bore within him the seed of evil? The wicked Cham.

53. What does Sacred History tells us about him? That he mocked at his father.

54. What therefore did Noe do? He pronounced his curse upon him.

55. What undertaking shows particularly the arrogance of mankind at that time? The building of a tower, the summit of which was to reach to heaven.

56. What was this tower called? The tower of Babel.

57. How did God frustrate this undertaking? By confusing their speech so that they could not understand one another.

58. Did God finally abandon mankind because of their wickedness as they deserved? No; God gave man abundant graces for the salvation of his soul for the sake of the promised Redeemer, and exhorted them in various ways to repentance and amendment.

59. What could God in His omnipotence have done with wicked men? He could either have punished them or have effaced them altogether from the face of the earth.

60. What did God do? God gave them abundant graces for the salvation of their souls.

61. What proof of God's grace can you enumerate by which God desires to lead men to repentance and amendment? The voice of conscience.

62. To what does the voice of conscience exhort all men at all times? It exhorts them to do good and refrain from evil.

63. What is the second proof of grace? The blessings in the natural kingdom.

64. Name one of these blessings. A good harvest.

65. What was the third proof of God's grace? Divine chastisements.

66. Mention one of these chastisements. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha.

67. How were these ungodly cities destroyed? By fire from heaven.

68. How did God punish the stiff-necked Egyptians? By awful plagues.

69. How did God punish the Canaanites who had given themselves up to idolatry? They were completely wiped out.

70. What was the fourth proof of God's grace? Remarkable men whom God sent to mankind.

71. Name some of them. Job, Jonas, and Daniel.

72. Where did God send Jonas? To the city of Ninive.

73. What was Jonas to do there? He was to preach penance to the Ninivites.

74. To whom was Daniel sent? To the idolatrous Babylonians.

75. What people did God make use of in His manifestations of grace? The people of Israel.

76. In what way did God make use of the Israelites? Through captivity they went with their books and sacred writings amongst the heathen.

77. Which was the last of God's manifestations that I mentioned to you? Angels, dreams, miraculous appearances and occurrences.

78. To whom did God reveal Himself by a wonderful dream? To King Pharao.

79. What did God reveal to him? The coming of the seven fruitful and the seven unfruitful years.

80. To what was the King Nabuchodonosor moved by a wonderful dream? To the knowledge of the true God.

81. How did God reveal Himself to the King Balthasar of Babylon? King Balthasar read, instructed by the wisdom of the Prophet Daniel, the destruction of himself and his kingdom, in handwriting by an invisible hand.

82. How did God reveal to the Magi the birth of the Saviour of the world? By a wonderful star.

83. What did God do, when in spite of all this men became worse and worse? God elected one single race to preserve the true faith and the hope of the Redeemer, and He made a covenant with them.

84. What were these people called? The Jewish or Israelitish people.

85. Whence comes the name "Jewish people?" It comes from "Juda."

86. Who was Juda? He was one of the twelve sons of Jacob.

87. Whence comes the name "Israelitish people?" This comes from Jacob, whose name was also Israel.

88. Why were these people called the chosen people? Because God had a particular affection for them above all the other people of the earth.

89. In what did the covenant consist which God made with the people of Israel? Herein: 1. That God promised the Israelites that He would protect and bless them as His chosen people, and that from them the promised Redeemer should proceed. 2. That the Israelites on their part vowed to adore the true God only and faithfully to observe His commandments.

90. Mention some of the holy men amongst the Israelites. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, David and the other Prophets.

91. What were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob generally called? They were called Patriarchs.

92. What does the word "Patriarch" mean? It means ancestor.

93. What else were the Israelites called because they descended from Abraham? They were called Hebrews.

94. What events are particularly remarkable in Abraham's lifetime? 1. The destruction of the ungodly cities Sodom and Gomorrha; 2. Isaac's sacrifice, and 3. The sacrifice of King Melchisedech.

95. Who was saved from the destruction of Sodom? Lot was saved.

96. By whom? By two angels.

97. Why was this? Because he was good and upright.

98. Mention the second important event of Abraham's life. The sacrifice of Isaac.

99. Who was typified by Isaac? Our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

100. What other event in the lifetime of Abraham is remarkable? The sacrifice of Melchisedech.

101. What was typified by the sacrifice of Melchisedech? The holy sacrifice of the Mass.

102. For what reason? Because in the holy sacrifice of the Mass Jesus Christ is offered up under the forms of bread and wine.

(The pupils will now recite briefly the three important events in the lifetime of Abraham.)

XX.

Continuation.

Who were Isaac and Jacob?

Isaac was the son and Jacob the grandson of Abraham, to whom God appeared several times, so as to fortify them in the promises He had made to Abraham.

In the Patriarch Jacob, to whom God gave twelve sons, God fulfilled the promise that from Abraham and his descendants there should proceed a great people. Jacob secretly obtained the blessing of his father Isaac. On his journey to Haran to his cousin Laban, he had the remarkable dream of the heavenly throne, upon which occasion God gave the promise that He would lead him into his country again, protect him, and never forsake him. God kept this promise. After Jacob had lived several years with Laban, he returned with his two wives Leah, and Rachel, and his children to his home. Jacob had, as we have already mentioned, twelve sons. The most remarkable of these were Juda and Joseph. To Juda his father Jacob gave his prophetic promise, "The scepter shall not be taken out of Juda nor the ruler's staff from thy descendants, till he come, that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations." Joseph, the second youngest son of Jacob, was hated by his brothers, because his father loved him more than them. They sold him, there-

fore, into slavery in Egypt. He came, however, after many vicissitudes to the court of the king, who raised him to the dignity of his governor. Joseph is hereby the prototype of our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ, who was betrayed also by His Disciple, and crucified by the Jews, and took vengeance on no one.

What did Moses do?

He delivered the people of Israel from Egyptian captivity and performed many great miracles. After Joseph was appointed governor by the king of Egypt, and enjoyed a comfortable position, he sent for his father and eleven brothers to come to Egypt. Now they increased so much in this country that the Egyptians were afraid of them, and a cruel edict was issued that all newly born Israelite boys were to be drowned.

Accordingly Moses, as an Israelite boy baby was to be drowned in the river Nile. His mother, however, could not abandon her beloved infant to the waters. So she plaited a basket of reeds, daubed it inside and out with pitch, laid the infant Moses in it, and then placed it in the sedges by the river's brink. The Providence of God led the king's daughter to this place, and she took pity upon the poor little boy, took him to the royal court, and there had him educated. But because he slew in holy zeal an Egyptian who had misused an Israelite, he was obliged to flee from Egypt. He went into the land of Madian to a priest named Jethro, whose daughter Sephora he married. One day as he was driving his flock far into the wilderness, he came to the Mount of God Horeb. Here he received from God, out of a burning bush, the command to lead the children of Israel out of their captivity in Egypt into the land of Canaan. As a proof of his Divine mission, God granted him the gift of miracles. Moses went, therefore, to King Pharao and demanded of him to let the Israelites go away. But Pharao did not know the true God, and he would not let the Israelites go. Then God sent by His servant Moses the most fearful plagues upon Egypt, and at last an angel, who destroyed in one night all the first born of the Egyptians. The destroying angel, however, did not approach the Israelites, because they had sprinkled their doorposts with the blood of the Paschal lamb, which by God's command they had slain and eaten on that same night. At last Pharao permitted the Israelites to go. They had become a great nation in Egypt, 600,000 men, with wives and children. Their departure from Egypt was so hurried that they had to take the dough with them before it was leavened. Moses led them

to the Red Sea. God Himself showed him the right way by means of a wonderful pillar of cloud, which at night changed to a pillar of fire. Pharao, however, soon regretted that he had allowed the Israelites to depart. He collected his army hurriedly and went in pursuit of the defenseless Israelites. The latter, filled with terror and fright, appealed to God for assistance. Then Moses, at the command of God, stretched forth his staff over the Red Sea, and behold, the sea divided itself before him. The waters stood like walls on either side and they passed through dry footed. Pharao, enraged, followed them hurriedly into the middle of the sea, but the waves suddenly flowed together again as Moses stretched his staff over them once more, and Pharao was swallowed up with his entire army.

The children of Israel had now to pass through a vast desert, and then they arrived at Mount Sinai. Here God gave them the ten commandments amidst thunder and lightning, inscribed upon two tablets of stone, renewed, too, the covenant which he had made with their fathers, and set in order their Divine worship, and their civil government by the most benevolent laws. With all God's love, however, the people soon forgot His blessings, they complained and murmured uninterruptedly; they even went so far as to have a golden calf cast which they worshiped. On account of their manifold offenses, they were obliged to remain in the desert for forty years, until another and better race had grown up. Still God did not cease to do good to them. He let the heavens rain down upon them bread, called manna, gave them water out of the rocks, and finally led them, after the death of Moses, into the promised land of Chanaan, or Palestine, which, with God's omnipotent assistance, they conquered, and then divided amongst the twelve tribes.

All the historical events just related were a preparation for future salvation. The deliverance of the people of Israel from the Egyptian captivity signifies our own deliverance from the captivity of Satan by Jesus Christ. The passage through the desert signifies our own pilgrimage upon earth, where God gives us His laws, feeds us with the bread of heaven, and fortifies us with the life-giving source of grace. The promised land is a figure of that heaven which we are to conquer by combat and possess eternally. The Israelites lived happily in this beautiful land of Chanaan blessed by God until, contrary to the commandments of God, they contracted marriages with the heathens and fell again into vice and idolatry. As often as

they turned away from the Almighty, He abondoned them to the power of their enemies; when they returned, however, He raised up in their midst devout heroes as Gideon, Jeptha, and Samson, who delivered them from their enemies.

These men were called judges. For more than four hundred years the high priest and the judges had conducted the government with the people of Israel. The last of the judges was Samuel. When the people wished to have a king like the neighboring nations, Samuel acceded to their request and anointed Saul as king, of the tribe of Benjamin. Saul was rejected by the Lord, and Samuel received from God the command to anoint as king David, who tended his flocks on the plains of Bethlehem, and who was the youngest son of Isaias.

Who was David?

David was a great king and prophet who received from God the promise that from his race should proceed the Messias, or the promised Redeemer.

As a youth David slew the giant Goliath, who had scoffed at the army of the one true God. As king he extended and increased the kingdom by brilliant victories and caused Israel to be in great repute amongst foreign nations. He served God with an upright heart, and undertook the most magnificent preparations for the erection of a temple to the one true God. To the praise of God he composed the most glorious songs, called the Psalms, wherein, Divinely inspired, he prophesied many things concerning the Saviour of the world, who was to proceed from his race and whose kingdom should have no end. For this reason, then, Christ is called also the Son of David.

Who was King David's successor?

Solomon, his son, who built a magnificent Temple at Jerusalem in which was typified the Divine worship ordained by God, the graces and mysteries of the New Law.

Solomon was seven years erecting the Temple, and he celebrated the completion and consecration of the same in the most royal manner. This one Temple for the entire kingdom is a type of the one Church of Christ. The daily sacrifice which was offered up in this Temple was a prototype of the most holy sacrifice of the Mass in the New Law. The tabernacle of the covenant, or the Holy of Holies in the Temple, in which was preserved the ark of the the covenant, the tables of the law, the manna, and Aaron's rod, is a prototype of the most Holy Eucharist.

By the building of this magnificent Temple, as well as by his great wisdom, which God granted him, Solomon's reputation spread far and wide.

Notwithstanding this, Solomon did not persevere in good. He took pagan wives and allowed himself, although he was quite old, to be led into idolatry. This bad example of the king had sad consequences for his people; they, too, fell into luxury and idolatry. From that time the conditions in the Jewish state became very serious. Even in Solomon's lifetime the tributary nations revolted, and after his death the kingdom was divided, in the year 980 before Christ. The tribes of Juda and Benjamin remained faithful to his son Roboam; the remaining ten tribes fell away and formed a kingdom of their own called Israel. The capital of this kingdom of Juda was Jerusalem; the capital of Israel, on the other hand, was Samaria. The tribes of Juda and Benjamin remained true to the religion of their fathers; the other ten tribes, however, abandoned the religion of their fathers and introduced into their Temple at Samaria all the horrors of idolatry. As a punishment God gave them into the power of the pagan king Salamanassar, who destroyed forever the kingdom of Israel and dragged the people into the Assyrian captivity at Ninive. The kingdom of Juda, too, on account of its many transgressions, was punished by the Lord, and led by King Nabuchodonosor into captivity in Babylon. The kingdom of Juda, however, did not perish for all time, as did the kingdom of Israel.

These severe chastisements did not come suddenly and unexpectedly, but they were foretold by the prophets.

What means "prophet"? Prophet means wise man, one who foretells, because the prophets foretold many things concerning the coming Redeemer. The prophets were devout men inspired by God, whose vocation it was to keep the people of Israel from idolatry, to warn them against sin, to exhort them to penance, and to prepare them for the merciful advent of the Redeemer of the world. At the same time, you must not suppose that the prophets foretold events by their own power, for then they would have been omniscient. No; whatever they prophesied was revealed to them beforehand by God. The prophets were divided into four great and twelve lesser prophets. The distinction, great and lesser, must not be understood to signify the persons, but their writings and prophecies.

What did the prophets foretell of the Redeemer?

1. The time and place of His birth.

2. The circumstances of His life, passion, and death.

3. His resurrection and ascension.

4. The founding and everlasting duration of His Church.

1. The time of His birth. The prophet Daniel prophesied that between the command to rebuild Jerusalem until the death of the Messias, not quite seventy weeks of years would elapse (a week of years has seven years), i. e., 490 years. The place of His birth was indicated by the Prophet Micheas, when he said, "And thou, Bethlehem Euphrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda; out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be the ruler in Israel; and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity."

2. The circumstances of His life. The prophets foretold (a) that a precursor (John) would prepare the way for Him; (b) that Jesus Christ would perform great miracles, "then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be opened, the tongues of the dumb loosened"; (c) that in poverty and peacefully He would make His entry into Jerusalem. The circumstances which referred to His passion and death that were foretold were that He would be led like a lamb to the slaughter, but that He would not open His mouth; that He would be sold for thirty pieces of silver, that He would be mocked and despised by the people; that His hands and feet would be pierced with nails, that His garments would be divided amongst the soldiers, but that they would cast lots for His mantle; that He would be given gall and vinegar to drink, and that He would be pierced.

3. His resurrection and ascension. The Prophet Isaias says, "The nations shall pray to him (the Messias) and his sepulcher shall be glorious." David says, "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption" (Ps. xv. 10).

4. The foundation and everlasting duration of His Church. "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Isaias foretold that the Messias would institute a new sacrifice and a new priesthood, and found a new kingdom of God, that would reach from ocean to ocean, unto the ends of the earth, and which would not perish through all eternity. Malachias says, "In every place there is sacrifice offered to my name, a clean oblation; for my name is great among the Gentiles."

Did the prophets prophesy long before the advent of the Redeemer?

Yes, their prophecies of the Redeemer were written down many centuries before His coming, and were spread abroad amongst the heathen. Isaias prophesied 759 years before Christ, Jeremias 629, and Malachias 450. For this reason Jesus said to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures, and the same are they that will give testimony of me."

When did the promised Redeemer come?

About 4,000 years after the creation of the world.

Why did the Redeemer come only after 4,000 years?

Because the world was to experience first into what profound misery it was plunged by sin, and that no one could save it but God. If the Redeemer had come directly after the fall, this blessing would not have been appreciated.

What was the condition of the world at that time?

The whole universe was steeped in idolatry and in all kinds of vice, the Jews alone knew the true God. The greater part of mankind had separated themselves from the knowledge and worship of the one true God, they were fallen into idolatry and all those vices which paganism and idolatry bring in their train, as impurity, adultery, sensuality, drunkenness, hatred, malice, etc. At this time appeared the promised Messias, Saviour, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. We will now repeat what we have explained to-day.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. "Who were Isaac and Jacob?" Isaac was the son, and Jacob the grandson of Abraham, to whom God appeared several times to confirm to them the promises which He had given to Abraham.

2. What did we hear about Isaac in the last instruction? That he was to be sacrificed by his father Abraham upon Mount Morea.

3. Where did Jacob spend a great part of his life? With his cousin Laban.

4. Where did Laban live? At Haran.

5. What do you know about Jacob's journey to Haran? Jacob was obliged to leave his father's house for fear of his brother Esau. On the way he had to sleep nights in the open fields. There he had a wonderful dream. He saw a ladder, which stood upon the earth but reached up to heaven, and behold the angels of God ascended and descended upon it. God was at the top and He said to him: "Fear not! I am thy protector wherever thou goest. I will lead the into this country again. I will not forsake thee until all things are accomplished which I have told thee."

6. What happened to Jacob at his cousin Laban's? He was obliged to tend Laban's flocks. By day he suffered from the heat, and at night he was almost frozen.

7. In what way was he cheated by Laban? Instead of Rachel he gave him Lia for his wife, and he was obliged to serve Laban another seven years for Rachel.

8. Did Jacob remain always with Laban? No; he returned to his father with his family.

9. How many sons did Jacob have? He had twelve sons.

10. Which were the two most remarkable amongst them? Juda and Joseph.

11. Why Juda? Because his father made him a prophetical promise.

12. Why was Joseph remarkable? Joseph was hated by his brothers because his father loved him more than them.

13. What did his brothers do to him? They sold him to the Ishmaelites for thirty pieces of silver.

14. Where did they take him? To Egypt into captivity.

15. Who bought him there? A nobleman named Putiphar, who was the royal chancellor and general of the army.

16. How did Joseph serve his master? Faithfully and honestly.

17. What misfortune overtook Joseph in Putiphar's house? He was falsely accused by Putiphar's wife and thrown into prison.

18. How did he regain his freedom? The king in one night had had two remarkable dreams, which no one could interpret. However, as Joseph was able to explain them he was given the office of cup-bearer at the royal court.

19. What else happened to Joseph? The king had such an affection for him that he exalted him to the rank of governor of all Egypt.

20. What good deeds did Joseph perform as governor? He saved his brothers several times from famine.

21. What had Joseph power to do? He could have taken revenge upon his brothers.

22. Why did he not do so? Because he had a noble heart.

23. What did Joseph become by his life? A prototype of Jesus Christ.

24. In what respect? Joseph was sold by his brethren for money, Jesus was betrayed by Judas for thirty pieces of silver. Joseph saved his brothers from famine, and did not revenge himself upon them. Neither did Jesus take vengeance upon His enemies. He saved all mankind from eternal perdition by His death of expiation upon the cross.

25. What happened to Joseph's brethren in Egypt? They multiplied so greatly that the Egyptians were afraid of them.

26. What did the Egyptians do therefore? They oppressed the Israelites very much.

27. What does Sacred History say concerning this? In the brick yards and in the fields they were treated like slaves.

28. What cruel edict was published so as to annihilate the Israelites by degrees? The order was given that all the newly-born male Israelite infants were to be drowned.

29. Who was commissioned by God to help them in their need? Moses.

30. Where was Moses brought up? At the court of the king of Egypt.

(The pupil will here recite the story of Moses.)

31. What unfortunate occurrence obliged Moses to leave Egypt? He had slain an Egyptian because the latter had misused the Jews.

32. Where did Moses journey to? To the land of Madian.

33. To whom did he go there? To Jethro, a priest.

34. As what? As a shepherd.

35. What important event took place at this time with Moses? One day as he was driving his flock far into the desert he came to Mount Horeb. Here he saw a bush which was on fire, but did not burn.

36. What did Moses receive here? He received the command from God to lead the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt into Canaan.

37. With what gift did God provide Moses that the king might believe him? The gift of working miracles.

38. What reply did Pharao make when Moses told him of God's orders? Pharao said: "I know no Lord. I shall not let the people leave."

39. What did Moses do then to prove his Divine mission? He threw his staff upon the ground that it might turn into a serpent, and when he grasped it, it turned to a staff again in his hand.

40. What effect did this miracle have upon Pharao? None whatever, he remained hardened.

41. Through what was Pharao compelled to let the Israelites depart? Because of great plagues, one more awful than the other.

42. When did Pharao finally give in? When all the first-born infants died in one night.

43. By what miracle did God prove His love for the Israelites? The destroying angel did not approach the Israelites.

44. Why not? Because they had sprinkled their door-posts with the blood of the lamb, which at God's command they had eaten that same night.

45. What was the number of the Israelites who marched out of Egypt? There were 600,000 men, with their women and children.

46. How many were there of them when they entered Egypt from Canaan? There were in all seventy persons.

47. Which of God's promises had been fulfilled? This, that God would multiply Abraham's descendants.

48. How did the march from Egypt take place? In the greatest hurry.

49. How can we tell this? Because they had to take the unleavened bread with them.

50. Where did Moses lead the Israelites to? Toward the Red Sea.

51. Who showed them the right way? God Himself.

52. In what way? By a miraculous pillar of cloud which went before them.

53. What do you know of this pillar of cloud? By day it was dark, but at night it was fiery.

54. What happened as soon as the Israelites had quitted the land of Egypt? Pharoa regretted that he had allowed them to leave.

55. What did he do in order to bring them back again? He hurriedly collected an army and went in pursuit of the defenseless Israelites.

56. Where did he overtake them? In the valley of the Red Sea.

(The pupil will here recite the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, and the destruction of Pharao and his army.)

57. What remarkable event took place when the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai? God gave them the Ten Commandments upon two tables of stone, amidst thunder and lightning.

58. Why did God write His commandments upon stone tables? To teach mankind that they should write His commandments deep and firm in their hearts, as they are engraved upon the stone.

59. How were the Israelites punished for their murmurings and idolatrous practices? They were obliged to remain forty years in the desert until another and better generation grew up.

60. When did the Israelites reach the promised land? Not until after the death of Moses.

61. How did they divide the promised land? Into twelve parts, one for each of the twelve tribes.

62. What does the liberation of the Israelites from captivity signify? It signifies our deliverance from the slavery of Satan through Jesus Christ.

63. What does the manna prefigure? It signifies the true bread of heaven, namely, the Most Holy Eucharist.

64. What does the promised land prefigure? Heaven, which we must conquer by combat.

65. What did God do as often as the Israelites turned away from Him? He delivered them into the power of their enemies.

66. And when they returned to Him again? He raised up devout heroes amongst them who delivered them from their enemies.

67. Mention some of these heroes? Gideon, Jephtha and Samson.

68. What were these heroes called? They were called Judges.

69. How long did the Judges rule the people of Israel? For more than 400 years.

70. Who was the last of the Judges? Samuel.

71. Who governed the Israelites after the Judges? The kings.

72. Who was the first king of Israel? Saul.

73. Who was called to be king of Israel after Saul? David.

74. Who was David? David was a great prophet and king who received from God the promise that the Messias should proceed from his race.

75. What has come down to us from king David? The most beautiful songs which David composed for the praise of God, called the Psalms.

76. Who was King David's successor? Solomon his son, who erected a magnificent temple at Jerusalem.

77. In what way did Solomon distinguish himself? 1. By his wisdom; and 2. By the building of the Temple.

78. In what manner is the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem a prototype? The one Temple for the whole of the Jewish nation is a figure of the one Church of Christ.

79. And the ordaining by God of a daily sacrifice in the Temple? Is a figure of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

80. What happened after Solomon's death? The kingdom was divided into two parts.

81. How did this division or separation take place? The tribes of Juda and Benjamin remained faithful to King Roboam, the remaining ten tribes fell away and formed a kingdom called Israel.

82. What were the chief cities of these kingdoms? Jerusalem was the capital of Juda, and Samaria of Israel.

83. Who were the prophets? The prophets were good men inspired by God, who foretold or prophesied of coming events.

84. Which prophet foretold the time of the Redeemer's birth? The prophet Daniel.

85. Which of the prophets declared that Bethlehem would be His birthplace? The prophet Micheas.

86. What else did the prophets foretell? The circumstances of His life, passion and death.

87. What did they prophecy of His life? That a precursor would prepare the way for Him.

88. Who was this precursor? St. John the Baptist.

89. What else did they prophesy of His life? His miracles.

90. What else did they prophesy? That He would be sold for thirty pieces of silver, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, that His hands and feet would be pierced with nails, and that gall and vinegar would be given Him to drink.

91. What did the prophets further prophesy of the Redeemer? His Resurrection and Ascension, and the founding and eternal duration of His Church.

92. When did the promised Redeemer come? About four thousand years after the creation of the world.

93. What was the condition of the world then? The whole world was steeped in idolatry and every kind of vice, the Jews alone still knew the true God.

94. What is the application? Thank God that He has given you the grace to know the promised Redeemer, whom the ancients sighed for so long; pray to God that He may enter into your hearts, and remain there always.

95. Which ecclesiastical season reminds us of the four thousand years before the coming of the Redeemer? The four weeks of Advent.

96. How does the Redeemer enter into our hearts? 1. With His grace; and 2. By the Holy Eucharist.

97. How long will Jesus the Redeemer remain with us? He will remain with us always.

98. How can you contribute toward this really taking place? By not committing sin.

God grant that you may ever be free from sin. Amen.

XXI.

The Second Article.

"And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord."

Dear Children:—In the instruction of to-day we come to the explanation of the second article of the creed. What does this article teach us?

It teaches us that the Redeemer whom God promised, and sent to us, is the only Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord. We heard in the foregoing instructions how God foretold by the prophets whom He inspired the merciful advent of the Redeemer as well as the time and place of His birth. Now, this Messias promised by God and

foretold by the prophets is Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord. Whilst the Jews are still hoping and expecting the promised Messias, we confess in the second article of the creed that He actually appeared in the person of our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ, therefore that God's promise has already been fulfilled. This Redeemer is not a creature created by God, but He is the only-begotten Son of God.

What does the name Jesus signify?

The name Jesus signifies Saviour, or Redeemer. Jesus is indeed our Saviour, for after our first parents brought down upon us by sin so much misery and unhappiness of body and soul, Jesus brought us salvation, namely, reconciliation with God, blessing, grace, and peace. This name was not given to Him by man, nor by accident merely, but by the command of God.

The angel said to Mary at the annunciation, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). In Holy Scripture other names are given to Him also, but they only serve to remind us of the graces of which we have become partakers through Him. He is called, for instance, the Good Shepherd, the Way, the Truth, the Life, Mediator and Intercessor with the Father, Son of David, the Word that was made flesh, etc.

What does the word Christ signify?

The word Christ—in Hebrew Messias—signifies anointed.

Why is Jesus called the anointed?

Because in the Old Law the prophets, high priests, and kings were anointed with oil, and Jesus is our greatest Prophet, Priest, and King. The word Christ originates in the Greek language and signifies the same as the Hebrew word Messias. It is an official and honorable name. In the Old Law the prophets were anointed because they were in many respects the ambassadors of God. The priests and kings were anointed because the priests offered sacrifice to God, and the kings ruled the people in God's stead.

Jesus is the greatest Prophet, because He reveals mysteries, but not as the prophets of the Old Law did by Divine revelations, but in virtue of His Divine omniscience.

He is also the greatest Priest, for He not only sacrificed Himself for us upon the cross in a bloody manner, but He also sacrifices Himself daily for us upon our altars in an unbloody manner.

He is the greatest King, for as God He is the King of Kings, the

Sovereign to whom the earth and all created things are subject. Hence Jesus said, "All power is given to me in heaven and upon earth," and "My kingdom is not of this world."

The Jews themselves called Him King, and Pilate wrote over His cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." From the name "Christ" is derived, too, the name "Christian." We are then also God's anointed, yet only when we live as Jesus taught us, by word and example.

Why is Jesus Christ called the "only Son of God"?

Because Jesus Christ is the only true and real Son of God from eternity of one nature and substance with God the Father. This means, that in Jesus Christ there dwell the same perfections, and in the same degree as in God the Father.

Are we not, then, also children of God?

Yes, we are children of God, but not by nature and from all eternity; we are only children adopted by grace. Our adoption as children of God is only an emanation of His mercy and compassion.

How do we know that Jesus Christ is the Messias or Redeemer promised by God?

We know it because in Him has been fulfilled all that the prophets have foretold of the Redeemer.

The prophecies of the prophets concerning the time and place of His birth, the circumstances of His life, passion, and death were so exactly fulfilled in Jesus Christ that no possible doubt can exist as to whether Jesus Christ was really the promised Redeemer. Hence He Himself said to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures, and the same are they that give testimony of me" (John v. 39).

Whence do we know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and true God?

We know it (1) from the prophecies; (2) from the testimony of His heavenly Father; (3) from His own testimony; (4) from the teaching of the Apostles; and (5) from the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

What do the prophets say?

They call the promised Redeemer "God—God with us, the Saint of Saints, the Wonderful—the Father of the world to come."

Isaias says of Him, "Take courage and fear not . . . God Himself will come and will save you." Further, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (God with us).

What is the testimony of His heavenly Father?

At the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, and at His transfiguration on Mount Thabor, a voice from heaven was heard saying, "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God the Father Himself, therefore, has twice testified publicly aloud and solemnly that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

What is the testimony of Christ?

1. Christ testified that He is the Son of God, and true God, like His Father.

(*a*) Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30).

(*b*) "He that seeth me, seeth the Father also" (John xiv. 9).

(*c*) "All things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine (John xvi. 15).

(*d*) "What things he (the Father) doth, these the Son also doth in like manner" (John v. 19).

(*e*) "That all men may honor the Son as they honor the Father" (John v. 23).

(*f*) When Peter said to Jesus, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God!" (Matt. xvi. 6), and Thomas said to Him, "My Lord, and my God!" (John xx. 28), our Saviour confirmed the faith and the declaration of both the Apostles.

2. Jesus confirmed His testimony by the holiness of His life, as well as by miracles and prophecies.

3. He sealed His testimony with His death. When Jesus was adjured before the tribunal to say whether He was the Son of God, He solemnly affirmed that He was Christ, the Son of God, that He sat at the right hand of God, and that He would come on the clouds of heaven—and upon this confession He suffered death.

What do the Apostles teach of Jesus Christ?

The Apostles explicitly teach:

1. That Jesus Christ is true God.

St. John says, "We know that the Son of God is come. This is the true God and life eternal." The Apostle St. Paul says, "Christ who is over all things, God blessed for ever."

2. That He possesses all the fulness of the Godhead, and the infinite perfections of God. St. Paul says, "In him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporally"—i. e., substantially. In Him (Christ) were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or princi-

palities, or powers, all things were created by Him and in Him, and He is before all, and by Him all things consist.

3. That all creatures should adore Him. "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." "Let all the angels of God adore him."

When Jesus calmed the storm on Lake Genesareth, they all fell down and adored Him, saying, "Thou art truly the Son of God!" When Jesus bowed His head upon the cross, the earth quaked and the sun was darkened, then the pagan Roman centurion cried aloud, "Verily, this was the Son of God."

What does the Catholic Church teach of Jesus Christ? The Catholic Church has ever believed and taught that Jesus Christ is true God, and of one substance with God the Father; and in defense of this fundamental Christian doctrine, she composed, at the Council of Nice, a special creed, and excommunicated those who taught the contrary. The holy martyrs also professed this belief and suffered with joy indescribable torments, even death itself, for it. The duration of the Church for 1900 years is a proof of the Divinity of Jesus and His teaching.

Why is Jesus Christ called our Lord?

Jesus Christ is called, and is, our Lord, (1) because as God He is the Lord and Creator of heaven and earth; (2) because as Redeemer He has bought us with His blood. The blood of Jesus Christ was the ransom, the price, with which we were bought. In this way we become His property, therefore He is also our Lord.

The doctrine and belief in the Divinity of Jesus is the foundation, the chief and fundamental teaching of Christianity. If Christ is not God, His doctrine therefore can not be Divine. As a house collapses without a foundation, which is the support of the whole house, so also the Divinity of Jesus is the foundation of Christianity. Application: Often invoke with the greatest veneration and confidence this Holy Name, especially in times of temptation. Take a delight in using this beautiful form of salutation, "Praised be Jesus Christ for evermore. Amen."

In commemoration of this name we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. St. Anthony of Padua says, "When thou art tempted by the evil one, invoke the Holy Name of Jesus. Say to him in the name of Jesus, who commands the winds and the seas, 'Depart from me!'"

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the second article of the creed.

2. What is the second article of the creed? I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

3. What does this second article of the creed teach us? It teaches us that the Redeemer whom God promised and sent to us is the only Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

4. As what did Jesus Christ then come to us? As our Redeemer.

5. What does the word Jesus signify? It signifies Saviour or Redeemer.

6. Who gave Him the name of "Jesus"? God Himself.

7. Through whom? Through the angel Gabriel.

8. What other name is given our Divine Saviour in Holy Scripture? He is called also the "Lamb of God."

9. Why? Because He has taken away the sins of the world.

10. What else is Jesus called? The Good Shepherd.

11. Why is He called the Good Shepherd? Because He loves and takes care of us as a shepherd does of his lambs.

12. What else is Jesus called? The Word that was made flesh.

13. Why? Because Jesus came down from heaven and became incarnate.

14. What does the word Christ signify? Christ means anointed.

15. Why is Jesus called the anointed? Because in the old law the prophets, high-priests and kings were anointed with oil, and Jesus is our greatest prophet, priest and king.

16. Why is Jesus our greatest Prophet? Because He revealed the mysteries of God to us.

17. Why is Jesus our greatest Priest? Because He offered Himself once for us upon the cross in a bloody manner, and He offers Himself daily on the altar in an unbloody manner.

18. Why is Jesus our greatest King? Because as God He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

19. What did Pilate write over His cross? "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

20. What did Jesus say of His Kingdom? "My kingdom is not of this world."

21. What name is derived from the word "Christ?" The name of "Christian."

22. What therefore does Christian signify? Christian signifies anointed.

23. Why are we anointed? Because we are called to the service of God.

24. When are we true Christians? When we live as Jesus taught us to live.

25. Why is Jesus Christ called the "only Son of God?" Because Jesus Christ is the only true and real Son of God from eternity, of one nature and substance with God the Father.

26. What does this mean? That Jesus Christ has the same Divine nature as God the Father, and the same perfections.

27. Are we not children of God also? Yes, but not by nature and from eternity; we are only adopted children by grace.

28. How do we know that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer promised by God? We know it because in Him has been fulfilled all that the prophets have foretold of the Redeemer.

29. Where was Jesus born? At Bethlehem, as the prophets had foretold.

30. At what time was Jesus Christ born? Exactly at that time which the prophets had foretold.

31. Were all the other prophecies concerning Jesus fulfilled also? Yes, all the circumstances of His life, passion and death were fulfilled.

32. For what sum of money was Jesus betrayed? For thirty pieces of silver, as the prophets had foretold.

33. What manner of death did Jesus suffer? He was crucified as the prophets had foretold.

34. What was done with the garments of Jesus? The soldiers divided them amongst them, but they cast lots for his mantle, as the prophets had foretold.

35. Whence do we know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and true God? 1. From the prophecies. 2. From the testimony of His heavenly Father. 3. From His own testimony. 4. From the teaching of the apostles. 5. From the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

36. What do the prophets say? They call the promised Redeemer "God," —God with us—the Wonderful—the Father of the world to come.

37. What is the testimony of the heavenly Father? At the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, and at his Transfiguration on Mount Thabor, a voice from heaven was heard saying: "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

38. What is the testimony of Christ Himself? Christ testified that He is the Son of God, and true God, like His Father.

39. With what words did Christ testify to this? Jesus said: "I and the Father are one."

40. Mention another expression? "All things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine."

41. In which sentence does Jesus demand Divine honor? "That all men may honor the Son, as they honor the Father."

42. Which of the Apostles spoke of the Divinity of Jesus? St. Peter and St. Thomas.

43. In what way did Christ confirm His own testimony? By Divine actions.

44. What are these Divine actions called? They are called miracles.

45. What did Jesus prove Himself to be by these miracles? 1. The Lord over life and death. 2. The Lord over human misery; and 3. The Lord of nature.

46. How did Jesus still further confirm His own testimony? By prophecies.

47. What, then, must Jesus have been? He must have been omniscient.

48. How did Jesus seal the testimony of His Divinity? By His death.

49. Would Jesus have sacrificed His life if He was not God? No; Jesus would not have sacrificed His life.

50. What is the teaching of the Apostles? The Apostles explicitly teach: 1. That Jesus Christ is true God. 2. That He possesses all the fulness of the Godhead; and 3. That all creatures should adore Him.

51. From what sentence does it show that Christ is true God? St. John says: "We know that the Son of God is come. This is the true God and life eternal."

52. Where is it mentioned that in Christ dwells the fulness of the godhead? St. Paul says: "In Him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead corporally, *i. e.,* substantially."

53. What do the Apostles teach further? That all creatures should adore Him.

54. What does Holy Scripture say concerning this? "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father."

55. What is the doctrine of the Catholic Church? The Catholic Church has ever believed and taught that Jesus Christ is true God, and of one substance with God the Father.

56. Where was this doctrine solemnly confirmed? At the Council of Nice.

57. What gave rise to it. The heresy of Arius.

58. In what did this heresy consist? Arius taught that Christ was not of the same nature as the Father.

59. Who testified with life and blood to the Divinity of Jesus? The holy martyrs.

60. What is an enduring proof of the Divinity of Jesus? The Catholic Church, which has endured for 1900 years.

61. Why is Jesus Christ called "our Lord"? Jesus Christ is called, and is, our Lord: 1. Because as God He is Lord and creator of heaven and earth; 2. Because as Redeemer He bought us with His blood.

62. When, then, did Jesus become our Lord? 1. By creation; and 2. by redemption.

63. Did not God the Father create the world alone? No; the Son of God participated also in the creation of the world.

64. What did I tell you of the blood which Jesus shed for our sins? That the blood of Jesus was the ransom with which He bought us.

65. What do we conclude from all that we have heard to-day? That Jesus Christ is really God.

66. What is the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus in our faith? It is the foundation, the ground work of our Christian faith.

67. For what reason? If Jesus was not God, His doctrine would be human and not Divine.

68. What does the application say? That we should frequently invoke the holy name of Jesus with veneration and confidence, especially when we are tempted. Take delight in using this beautiful form of salutation: "Praised be Jesus Christ for evermore. Amen."

69. What feast has the Catholic Church instituted in honor of the Most Holy Name of Jesus? The feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.

70. When is this celebrated? On the second Sunday after the Epiphany.

71. Who instituted it for the whole of Christendom? Pope Innocent XIII.

72. What should we learn from the lesson of to-day? 1. Always to believe firmly in the Divinity of Jesus; and 2. Always to invoke the Holy Name of Jesus with veneration and confidence.

In conclusion, I wish to caution you against certain ungodly persons who, as Arius once did, deny the Divinity of Jesus. Do not let the belief in the Divinity of Jesus be torn from your hearts. Together with the belief in the Divinity of Jesus you would lose the foundation of your faith, and with faith your eternal salvation also. We will conclude this instruction with that salutation so sacred and worthy of veneration by every Catholic:

"Praised be Jesus Christ, for evermore. Amen."

XXII.

The Third Article: "Who was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary."

Dear Children:—In the explanation of the Catechism we have arrived at the third article of the Creed which says: "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

What does the third article of the Creed principally teach us?

It teaches us that the Son of God, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, became man, i. e., took to Himself a body and soul like ours.

This article therefore treats of the fulfilment of that promise which God made to our first parents in Paradise, and later renewed through the Patriarchs and Prophets. Thus this article is connected with the words of the Evangelist St. John: "The word (the one begotten of the Father) was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John i. 14).

To become our Redeemer, and to accomplish the work of reconciliation between God and the sinful human race, it was necessary that Jesus should become man; He had to take a human body and a human soul like ours, but He thereby remained God, for a sinful man could render no satisfaction to the offended Majesty of God. The Incarnation of the Son of God, however, did not take place in

the natural way, but through the operation of the Holy Ghost, and is therefore a mystery to us, because it happened in a supernatural, miraculous, most incomprehensible manner. The Catechism asks: "What do we call this mystery?" "The incarnation of the Son of God."

It is an incomprehensible mystery to us: 1. How the second Person of the Godhead, the Son of God, took upon Himself our complete human nature, namely, a human body and a human soul and united it with Himself in One Person, and 2. How this happened through the Holy Ghost, from a Virgin, who was and always remained a Virgin.

What is then our belief concerning Jesus Christ, when we believe the mystery of the Incarnation? We believe that Jesus Christ is both true God and true man, or that He is a God-man: He is God from eternity, and became man in time. Jesus Christ therefore in His Incarnation did not cease to be God, but He remained God as He was from eternity, and only united the Divine nature with the human. His body was therefore not merely an apparent body, but Jesus Christ was at the same time true God and true man. That Jesus Christ is true God like the Father, has already been proven by the second article of the Creed. We have still to prove that He was also true man; that is to say, that He had a human body and human soul as we have.

Jesus had: 1. A human body, for He Himself spoke of His body to the Jews: "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Of the anointing of His body by Mary Magdalene He said: "She anoints my body for the burial."

Jesus speaks further of His body to His Disciples: "Behold my hands and my feet, it is I myself: feel and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and blood."

Jesus had also human wants, as hunger, thirst, sleep, etc. After He had fasted in the desert forty days and nights He was hungry.

On the cross Jesus cried out: "I thirst!" During the storm on the sea of Galilee, His Disciples awoke Him from sleep.

Jesus endured corporal sufferings. He was scourged, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the cross by His hands and feet, His side was pierced by a lance, out of which blood and water flowed.

2. Jesus had also a human soul. It says in Scripture that Jesus grew in wisdom and in grace before God and men. As God, Jesus

could not increase His perfections, those words then can only have reference to His human soul.

"How many natures then are there in Jesus Christ?" "There are two natures in Jesus Christ, the Divine and the human." For this reason we often find the name God-man instead of Jesus Christ.

You must not, however, have an erroneous idea about this, for instance that the Godhead dwelt in a human body as a vivifying spirit. No! "Jesus Christ was at the same time true God and true man and both natures were inseparably united in the one Person of the Son of God."

"Are there also two persons in Jesus Christ?"

No; Jesus Christ is only one Divine Person; for the two natures are inseparably united in the one Person of the Son of God.

There are not therefore two Christs—a Divine and a human; but the one and the same Christ is at the same time true God and true man in one Person. As a man consists of two parts, a body and a soul, therefore of two substances, a corporeal and a spiritual, so has Christ two natures, the Divine and the human, but He is only one and the same Divine Person. St. Athanasius says: "Christ is God-man, He is one and the same who was born of the Father before all time, and in time of the Virgin."

"From whom did the Son of God take His human nature?" From Mary, the purest of Virgins; therefore she is also called "Mother of God."

This truth is proven by the annunciation of the angel: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

The Most Blessed Virgin Mary is therefore the Mother of God But you must not interpret this in the sense that she bore the Godhead for Jesus Christ was God from all eternity, but in the sense that Mary bore the God-man, that He took the human nature from her. If, therefore, Jesus Christ was God, Mary also was the Mother of God. In remembrance of this we celebrate every year on March 25 the Feast of the Annunciation.

Why is Mary called "the purest of Virgins"? Because she always remained a Virgin incomparably pure and entirely undefiled, not only before, but also at and after the birth of the Divine child.

Mary therefore never lost her Virginity either at the birth of the

Divine child or afterwards, but she remained throughout her whole life an incomparably pure Virgin, for the purity of no Virgin can be compared to Mary's purity.

The holy doctor St. Augustine says: "A Virgin conceived, a Virgin bore, and after the birth remained a Virgin."

Had Jesus Christ also a father? As man Jesus Christ had no father; for Joseph, the virgin-spouse of Mary, was only his foster-father. Certainly Joseph the spouse of Mary is called the father of Jesus, but he was only His foster-father. Joseph bestowed indeed upon the child Jesus the same care and love as a father does for his natural son, and he looked after His wants, as food, clothing, dwelling and so forth.

Furthermore Joseph was the protector of Virgin Mother Mary, that he might protect her honor from the persecution and evil aspersions of the Jews. To commemorate the high dignity of the foster-father of Jesus we celebrate every year on March 19 the feast of St. Joseph. He is a worthy model of what every father should be to his family, and how they should bring up their children, namely, in piety and the fear of God. That Joseph was only the foster-father of Jesus and not his natural father, follows from the words of Scripture: "Jesus being (as it was supposed) the Son of Joseph," that is to say, the people were of that opinion, but in reality it was not so.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph together are called the Holy Family, and it is these names that many Christians implore confidently for protection and help in great danger.

The sin of our first parents as an offense to the Supreme Majesty of God required either an infinite punishment or an infinite satisfaction. But as all mankind are sinners and born in sin, no man, therefore, could render satisfaction to the Divine justice. But God the all-good and all-merciful did not wish the death of the sinner. Jesus came as Mediator between God and sinful humanity By His passion, by the innocent blood which He shed upon the cross, and by His death thereon, He desired to accomplish the work of reconciliation. But as He could not suffer and die as God, He had to become man, to take a human body and a human nature. In remembrance of the mysterious Incarnation of the Son of God we say the Angelus thrice daily, morning, noon and evening, at the sound of the bell. The first part of the Angelus contains the annunciation to Mary by the angel, the second part Mary's answer, and the

third part the fulfilment of the promise in the words, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. On what have we spoken to-day? Of the third article of the creed.

2. What is the third article? "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary? Jesus Christ the Son of God.

4. Of which Virgin was he born? Of Mary, the purest of Virgins.

5. What then does the third article teach us? It teaches us that Jesus, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, became man, that is to say that He took a body and a soul like ours.

6. How, therefore, did the Incarnation of the Son of God take place? Through the operation of the Holy Ghost.

7. Did Jesus accordingly become Incarnate in a natural manner? No, it took place in a supernatural and miraculous manner.

8. Can we comprehend how the Son of God became man? No, we cannot comprehend.

9. What do we call all those things which man cannot comprehend or grasp with his understanding? We call them mysteries.

10. What do we call this mystery? The Incarnation of the Son of God.

11. Although we cannot comprehend the mystery of the Incarnation what must we do? We must believe it.

12. What then do we believe when we believe the mystery of the Incarnation? We believe that Jesus Christ is at the same time true God and true man. He is God from all eternity and He became man in time.

13. What do we call Jesus the Son of God, because He is God and man at the same time? We also call Him God-man.

14. Was Jesus, however, only a human being like you or I, merely a human person? No, Jesus was not merely man.

15. Why not? Because He was God and man at the same time.

16. What distinction is there between the Divinity and the humanity of Jesus? He is God from all eternity, but as man He once had a beginning.

17. What do we say therefore? That he became man in time.

18. What does this mean—Jesus became man? He took a body and soul like ours.

19. Was his body a real human body? Yes, it was a real human body.

20. Was His soul a divine or a human soul? It was a human soul.

21. What proofs have we that Jesus really had a human body? Jesus Himself speaks of his body.

22. Upon what occasions? He said to the Jews. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

23. Where else? Jesus said to His disciples: "Behold my hands and my feet, it is I myself; feel and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and blood."

24. What did Jesus say when Mary Magdalene anointed Him? She anoints my body for the burial.

25. What was the second proof? Jesus also had human necessities, as hunger, thirst, sleep, etc.

26. When did He suffer hunger? When he had fasted forty days.

27. Whence did He cry out, "I thirst"? Upon the cross.

28. Upon what occasion are we told that Jesus slept? During the storm upon lake Genesareth.

29. What was the third proof? Jesus underwent pains of the body and pains of the soul.

30. When did Jesus endure bodily sufferings? At His imprisonment, His scourging, at His crowning with thorns, and at the crucifixion.

31. Where did Jesus undergo sufferings of the soul? In the Garden of Olives, at and before being made a prisoner and upon the cross.

32. How can you prove to me that Jesus had a human soul also? From Holy Scripture.

33. From what verse? Jesus grew in age, and he increased in wisdom and grace before God and man."

34. Could Jesus as God increase in wisdom and grace? No, as God, Jesus could not increase in age, wisdom, or grace.

35. Why could He not as God increase in wisdom and grace? Because He was endowed with all the Divine perfections.

36. To what then can this text of Scripture alone have reference? To His human nature and to His human soul.

37. How many natures are there in Jesus Christ? There are two natures in Jesus Christ: the Divine nature because He is God and the human nature because He is man.

38. Of what erroneous opinion did I warn you? That Jesus was God according to His soul, and man according to His body.

39. What is really right? That Jesus Christ is at the same time true God and true man.

40. What follows therefrom? That the Divine and human natures are united in the one Person of Jesus Christ.

41. Are there two Persons in Jesus Christ? No, Jesus Christ is only one Divine Person.

42. From whom did Jesus Christ the Son of God take human nature? From Mary, the purest of virgins, and hence she is called the Mother of God.

43. Can you give me proof of this? Yes, from Holy Scripture. At the communication the Angel Gabriel said to Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

44. What do we call Mary because she gave birth to Jesus? We call her the Mother of God.

45. In what sense ought you to take this word? Not in the sense as if Mary had given birth to the Godhead.

46. Why could not the Godhead be born of Mary? Because Jesus was God from all eternity.

47. And for what other reason? Because Mary was a human being like us.

48. What, then, is meant by Mary being the Mother of God? We understand that Jesus took His human nature from Mary.

49. What feast does the Catholic Church celebrate in commemoration of this event? The feast of the annunciation, which occurs March 25.

50. Have you ever noticed in the picture of the annunciation that the angel held a flower in his hand? Yes, a lily.

51. What color is the lily? It is white.

52. Of what is it an emblem? It is the emblem of purity of heart.

53. Why do we see a lily in the picture? Because Mary is the purest of virgins.

54. Why is Mary called the purest of virgins? Because she always remained a virgin incomparably pure and entirely undefiled. Not only before but also at and after the birth of the Divine Child.

55. From what circumstance is it proved that Mary never had any other children? As Jesus hung upon the Cross He recommended His mother to His favorite disciple John.

56. If Jesus had had other brothers and sisters what would He have done then? He would have commended His mother to them.

57. Had Jesus Christ also a father? As man, Jesus Christ had no father, for Joseph, the virgin-spouse of Mary, was only His foster-father.

58. What does that mean? Joseph cared for the Child Jesus like a natural father; he procured food and clothing for Him, and everything else that He required.

59. What therefore does Holy Scripture say? Jesus was supposed to be Joseph's son.

60. What does that mean? It was the opinion of the people that Jesus was the son of Joseph.

61. What was Joseph to the Blessed Virgin Mary? He was her virgin-spouse and protector.

62. Was it an exalted dignity for St. Joseph to be the foster-father of Jesus? Yes, it was a great grace.

63. When do we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph? Upon the 19th of March every year.

64. To whom should St. Joseph be a model and an example? To all fathers of families.

65. What should they learn of him? To bring up their children in virtue and the fear of God.

66. Why did the Son of God become man? That He might be able to suffer and die for us; for as God He could neither suffer nor die.

67. For what reason did Jesus desire to suffer and to die? To redeem us and to reconcile us to God.

68. Could not a creature have done this? No, a man could not have done this.

69. Why not? Because all men are born in sin.

70. Is it an agreeable thing to suffer and die in such awful agony as Jesus did, and to be innocent? No, it is very hard.

71. What then did Jesus evince for mankind in suffering and dying for them? He showed His great love for them.

72. What ought to remind us daily of the Incarnation of the Son of God? The angelus.

73. Of what does it consist? Of three parts.

74. What does the first part contain? The annunciation to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel.

75. What are the words? "The angel of the Lord announced unto Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Ghost."

76. What does the second part contain? Mary's answer to the angel's message.

77. What does it say? "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word."

78. What does the third part contain? The fulfilment of the angel's message.

79. In what words? "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

80. What is the application? "Give thanks to God with your whole heart, that for love of you He became a poor child, particularly when you hear the angelus-bell ring in the morning, at noon, and at night."

81. Of what should the angelus particularly remind us? Of the great blessings of which we partake through the Incarnation of the Son of God.

82. If Jesus had not become man, if He had not redeemed us, could we have entered into heaven? No, heaven would have been closed against us.

83. What then do we owe Our Redeemer Jesus Christ for His Incarnation? The greatest gratitude.

We will now conclude the religious instruction for to-day, and I wish to exhort you again always to invoke devoutly the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and never to neglect to say the Angelus devoutly and with edification. That Jesus became man should encourage you to honor human dignity as well in yourself as in others, by ordering your life according to the model and example of the Incarnate Son of God, and further that you should never desecrate the image of God in mankind by temptation to sin and vice.

XXIII.

Of the Life of Jesus Christ upon Earth.

Dear Children:—In the last lesson on religion we spoke of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and to-day we come to the paragraph, "Of the life of Jesus Christ upon earth." This treats of the birth of Jesus, of His youth, of His life and works upon earth. The Catechism asks first of all: Where was Jesus Christ born? The answer is, "At Bethlehem, in a stable." In commemoration of this we celebrate the feast of Christmas. By the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem the prophecies are fulfilled: "And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda; out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity."

Jesus, then, was born in a stable. He, the Son of the Most High, before whom all should bend the knee, in heaven, upon earth, and under the earth, He was born in a stable. He, before whom kings and thrones tremble, appears in the direst poverty and want, for

the consolation of the poor and to show them how they should and can bear poverty in patience. I will relate briefly for you the events from the Scriptures: Mary and Joseph dwelt, as you will learn, not at Bethlehem, but in Nazareth, where they lived by the work of their hands. Then a command of the Emperor Augustus was published that all subjects of the countries belonging to the Roman empire must be enrolled. Consequently every one was obliged to return to the city of their race. Joseph and Mary were descendants of the royal house of David; they were obliged, therefore, to journey to Bethlehem, which was David's birthplace. So long a journey was very difficult for them at this time, particularly for the Virgin Mother. Still they both obeyed the emperor, and started at once upon the journey. They arrived at Bethlehem late at night. Fatigued by the journey they sought a resting place, only to be refused shelter everywhere, either on account of the many strangers present or because of their poverty. On the outskirts of the town there was a cave, which served the shepherds as a meeting place and as a stable for their flocks. Thither Joseph and Mary went, and in this miserable place Jesus Christ—the Saviour of the world—was born. Mary wrapped the Infant in swaddling clothes and laid Him in the manger, as there was no better place. In commemoration of this we celebrate the feast of Christmas. The Church's celebration of this feast differs greatly from the celebration of other festivals. On this feast, for instance, the priest offers up the holy sacrifice of the Mass three times. The triple offering of the Mass reminds us of His triple birth: 1. From His heavenly Father, 2. From Mary the Virgin, and 3. In the hearts of all good men. Christmas is a joyful festival for every one. It is customary to exchange Christmas presents at that season, and for the children, even the very youngest, it is a time of rejoicing. A Christmas tree is decorated for the children, upon which is hung everything that will please them most. This Christmas tree has a twofold significance. First of all it reminds us of the tree in Paradise, through which Eve was tempted to sin; also of the tree of the cross upon which our Saviour redeemed us. But as Jesus was no ordinary child, God therefore wished to reveal His Son's Divinity by miraculous happenings and occurrences.

"Who came first of all to adore the Infant Jesus? First there came some good shepherds from the vicinity, then came the Magi or the three kings from the East." (The usual stories can either be read by the pupils or related by them.)

God chose for the first adorers of His Divine Son shepherds, men who were not tainted with the pride and vanity of the world, in whom dwelt those sentiments of the spirit of humility, of charity, and of patience which Jesus came from heaven to preach. After the shepherds there came, led by a wonderful star, the three kings from the East, probably from Arabia. At first the star conducted them to Jerusalem, so that the birth of Jesus might be made known to the Jews also, and then to Bethlehem, where they found the Divine Infant, prostrated themselves before Him, and offered Him their presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The wise men offered gold because Jesus was King; frankincense because He was God, and myrrh because He was man, and as such would have much to suffer.

How did the shepherds and the Magi hear of the birth of Jesus?

The shepherds heard of the birth of Jesus by an angel and the Magi by a wonderful star.

From the adoration of the shepherds at the crib originates that beautiful custom of placing a crib in the church for the edification of young and old. This pious custom was introduced by St. Francis of Assisi, who was a special venerator of the Infant Jesus. To stimulate his devotion, the idea occurred to him of building a crib, in which lay the image of the Infant Jesus, surrounded by Joseph and Mary, angels and shepherds. At Christmas time everything was brilliantly illuminated and people came from all parts to the crib, where St. Francis preached and moved his audience to tears. The celebration met with general approbation and widespread imitation.

To commemorate the adoration of the Christ Child by the Magi we celebrate on January 6 every year the feast of the Epiphany.

What happened to Jesus a few weeks after His birth? On the fortieth day Jesus was presented in the Temple at Jerusalem.

In commemoration of this we celebrate the feast of the Purification, or Candlemas Day.

(Here should be inserted the story of the "Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.") Mary, although she was the Mother of God, fulfilled conscientiously the obligations which were imposed upon her by the law of Moses. On the fortieth day after His birth Mary presented her only begotten Son to God in the Temple at Jerusalem, and at the same time made the prescribed offering. She was too poor to offer a lamb. She gave, therefore, in tranquil

humility, the offering of the poor: a pair of young doves, like the poorest Israelite.

Inspired by the Holy Ghost, Simeon, a God fearing and just man, entered the Temple. Rejoicing he took the Infant in his arms and exclaimed, looking with gratitude up to heaven: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace: because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all thy people, a light to the revelations of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Enlightened by the spirit of prophecy Simeon likewise foretold of the Divine Child: "Behold, this child is set for the ruin and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted, and thy own soul a sword shall pierce."

As Jesus upon this occasion was called by Simeon the light for the enlightenment of the heathen, candles are blessed upon this feast of Mary's Purification.

Did the Child Jesus remain always at Jerusalem or in Juda? No; Joseph and Mary fled with the Child into Egypt, because King Herod sought His life. (Here is inserted the story of the "Flight into Egypt.") In commemoration of this heinous crime of King Herod in massacring the children of Bethlehem, the Church celebrates every year, on December 28, Holy Innocents' Day.

Where did Jesus live after His return from Egypt? He lived until He was thirty years of age in His parents' house, and He was subject to them. During this time Jesus lived under the eyes of His parents at Nazareth. He helped them in their work, and He was subject to them. What a beautiful and commendable example for a son!

Why did Jesus wish to be subject? To teach children obedience toward their parents. In the same way that Jesus was obedient to His heavenly Father, even unto death upon the cross, He also desired to be obedient and subject to His Mother Mary, and to His foster-father, Joseph, and show children how they should obey their parents.

What did Jesus do in His twelfth year? When He was twelve years old Jesus went with His parents to Jerusalem, and remained there three days in the Temple. (Here is inserted the story of "Jesus in the Temple.") The distance from Nazareth to Jerusalem was about ninety miles. Although the journey was long and difficult Jesus accompanied His parents joyfully.

This should put many of you to the blush, who live so near the church and yet do not care to go there. Jesus listened to the Doctors in the Temple, questioned them, and answered their questions.

If the services of the Church are to bring forth good fruit in us, we must be devout and edifying during the same, especially should we be attentive during the preaching of the word of God. What a beautiful example Jesus has given to those children and persons who behave so badly in church, talk, laugh, nudge one another, and give scandal.

Jesus remained three days in the Temple. How many people yawn and get tired in church if the service should last longer than half an hour. Indeed, there are many persons who do not even enter the church for one-half hour on Sundays.

Jesus excited the astonishment of all those present by His questions and answers. Should not this encourage you to great diligence, so that you may be able to answer all the questions rightly? But parents, too, should learn from this occurrence to make their children early acquainted with God, to pray, and go gladly to the House of God, there to attend the instruction.

Above all things we see from the story of Jesus that He must have led a tranquil, modest, and contemplative life. What a glory for Joseph and Mary, who must themselves have given Jesus the most beautiful examples.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the life of Jesus Christ upon earth.
2. Of what does this lesson treat? Of the birth of Jesus, of His youth, and of His life and works upon earth.
3. Where was Jesus Christ born? At Bethlehem, in a stable.
4. Why was Jesus born at Bethlehem? That that which was foretold by the Prophets might be fulfilled.
5. Did His parents live in Bethlehem? No, they were from Nazareth.
6. What took them to Bethlehem? They went there to be enrolled.
7. By whose command was this? That of the Roman Emperor Augustus.
8. When did they arrive at Bethlehem? Late at night.
9. In what condition were they after the journey? They were very fatigued.
10. What then did Joseph first seek for? A resting place for himself and Mary.
11. Was he successful in this? No, he was refused everywhere.

12. For what reason? Partly because there was so many strangers in the town, and partly on account of his poverty.

13. Where did they finally take refuge? In a cave where the shepherds of the vicinity used to meet, and that served as a stable for their flocks.

14. What took place in this wretched cave? There Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world.

15. Why was Jesus Christ born in such poverty and want? Jesus desired thereby to console the poor and to teach them to bear their poverty with resignation.

16. What feast does the Catholic Church celebrate in commemoration of this event? The feast of Christmas.

17. Upon what date? The 25th December every year.

18. In what way is this feast distinguished from others? By the offering up of the holy sacrifice of the Mass three times by the priest.

19. Of what should the brightly lighted church at early service remind us? That Jesus brought us the light of truth and the Gospel.

20. Of what should the triple offering of the Mass remind us? Of the threefold birth of Jesus.

21. Explain this. 1. Of the birth from His Heavenly Father; 2. Of the birth from Mary the Virgin, and 3 Of His birth in the hearts of all good men.

22. What do people do in order to make it a joyful feast? They give one another presents.

23. What is done to make the feast an occasion of rejoicing even to the smallest children? A Christmas tree is decorated for them.

24. What signification has the Christmas tree? It should remind us of the forbidden tree in Paradise, and of the tree of the cross upon which Our Saviour died.

25. Who came first of all to adore the Divine Infant? First came the good shepherds from the vicinity, then the wise men or three kings from the East came.

26. How did the shepherds learn of the birth of Jesus? Through an angel.

27. Tell me something about this. (The child will here briefly tell the story of the "Shepherds at the crib.")

28. Where were the good shepherds when they heard of Jesus' birth? They were in the fields.

29. What were they doing at night time in the fields? They were keeping watch over their flocks.

30. Who appeared to them? An angel.

31. What does the Scripture say concerning him? That he was surrounded by a celestial light, a dazzling radiance.

32. What effect had this on the shepherds? They were greatly frightened.

33. How did the angel reassure them? He said: "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people. For this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the Infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger."

34. What took place as the angel spoke these words? There appeared a multitude of the Heavenly Host and they all joined in this hymn of praise: "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will."

35. What did the shepherds say when they had recovered from their fright? They said: "Let us go over to Bethlehem; and let us see this word that has come to pass which the Lord hath showed to us."

36. What did they do then? They went to the well-known cave, found the Divine Infant there and adored Him.

37. How were the three kings made aware of the birth of Jesus? By a most wonderful star.

38. Where did this star conduct them first? To Jerusalem.

39. To whom did they go there? To King Herod.

40. What did they say to him? They inquired where the new born King of the Jews was.

41. Why could Herod not answer this question? Because he did not know himself.

42. What effect did the news of a newly-born King of the Jews produce upon Herod? He was greatly afraid thereat.

43. For what reason? He feared to lose his crown.

44. How could this be? He was afraid that another would be king in his place.

45. What did Herod do, in order to find out where the newly-born King of the Jews was? He caused the chief priests and scribes to come together, and asked them where Christ was to be born.

46. What answer did they give? "In Bethlehem of Juda: for so it is written by the prophet."

47. What did the wise men do when they knew where to find Jesus? They started on the road to Bethlehem.

48. What remarkable thing happened after they had left the city of Jerusalem? The star reappeared to them, led them to Bethlehem, and remained stationary over the house where Joseph and Mary were.

49. What did the three kings do before the Divine Infant? They adored Him, and presented Him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

50. What did the gold signify? That Jesus Christ was King.

51. What was the meaning of the frankincense? That Jesus Christ was God.

52. What did the myrrh signify? That Jesus Christ was man and as such would have much to suffer.

53. What is myrrh? Myrrh is a very bitter spice.

54. What injunction did King Herod lay upon the three kings before they left Jerusalem? He said to them: "When you have found the child, return and tell me, that I too may go and adore Him."

55. Was that really Herod's intention? No, it was not.

56. What was Herod's intention? To kill the Infant Jesus.

57. How did God frustrate King Herod's plans? An angel appeared in a dream to the three wise men and commanded them to return home by another route and not to go to Jerusalem.

58. Did they heed the Divine admonition? Yes, they returned home by another road.

59. What virtues are seen in the wise men? 1. Their great faith, which did not waver at the lowly appearance of the Divine Child in His poverty; 2. The love and zeal with which they sought Jesus, and did not rest until they found Him, and 3. The reverence with which they knelt and adored the Infant Jesus.

60. What pious and beautiful custom originates from the adoration of the shepherds at the crib? The beautiful custom of setting up cribs for the edification of young and old.

61. Who was the first to do this? St. Francis of Assisi.

62. What feast does the Catholic Church celebrate to commemorate the adoration of the Christ Child by the magi? The feast of the Epiphany, January 6.

63. What happened to Jesus a few weeks after His birth? On the fortieth day after His birth He was presented in the Temple at Jerusalem.

64. By whom? By His mother Mary.

65. Why did Mary do this? Because it was prescribed by the law of Moses.

66. What extraordinary thing happened at the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, Simeon, a devout old man, entered the Temple. Rejoicing, he recognized at once in the Child Jesus the promised Redeemer, took Him in his arms and exclaimed, with a grateful look to heaven: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant O Lord, according to thy word, in peace: because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all thy people, a light to the revelations of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

67. What prophecy did Simeon make upon this occasion? "This child is set for the ruin and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted."

68. What prophecy did Simeon make to the Divine Mother? "Thy own soul a sword shall pierce."

69. What did those words mean? That Mary would have a great deal to suffer for her Son's sake.

70. What should all parents do in imitation of Mary? They should offer their children to God.

71. How may this be done? By bringing up their children for God and for eternal life.

72. Did Jesus always remain in Jerusalem or Juda? No, Joseph and Mary fled with the Infant into Egypt because King Herod sought His life.

73. For what reason? Because Herod feared he would lose his crown through the Infant Jesus.

74. What did he do, therefore, in order to get Him out of the way? He caused all the male children in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were not yet two years old to be killed.

75. How did it fare with the Infant Jesus? He was saved.

76. In what manner? An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: Take the Child and Mother and flee into Egypt for the king seeks to kill It. Remain there until I recall thee.

77. What does history call the bloody crime of King Herod? The Murder of the Innocents.

78. When is this day commemorated by the Church? Upon the 28th December.

79. What do we perceive in this story? How miraculously God protected the Infant Jesus.

80. How long did the Holy Family remain in Egypt? Until Herod died.

81. Where did Jesus live after His return from Egypt? He lived at Nazareth with His parents until His thirtieth year, and He was subject to them.

82. How did Jesus provide for His parents? By helping them in their work.

83. Why did Jesus desire to be subject to His parents? To teach all children obedience toward their parents, and that they might take Him as their model.

84. What beautiful example did Jesus give to young people in His twelfth year? He went to Jerusalem with His parents and remained there three days in the Temple.

85. What did He do during those three days in the Temple? He listened to to the Doctors, questioned them, and answered their questions.

86. Why did Jesus remain three days in the Temple? To teach us what pleasure we should take in prayer and instruction.

87. What is the aim of prayer? To unite us to God.

88. What should you do so as to be able to give the right answers in religious instruction? I should be very attentive and diligent.

89. What must the life of Jesus have been until His thirtieth year? It must have been tranquil, modest, and contemplative; an example of holiness.

We will now conclude the lesson for to-day, and I exhort you once again to have always the example of the Divine Child Jesus most earnestly and fervently before your eyes in all your actions. If you do what He did, and omit what He omitted, you will not only resemble Him, but you will be united with Him in heaven one day.

Be in particular subject to your parents in all good. Jesus was the Son of God Himself, and yet He was subject to His Mother Mary, and to His foster-father Joseph, to give you an instructive and attractive example. But you must not only practice this virtue of obedience in your youth, but also when you are grown up. Furthermore, you should always behave quietly and in an edifying manner in Church, and always go there gladly. O how beautiful it is to be a child and favorite of God; how beautiful it is to be united with God.

XXIV.

Continuation of the Life of Jesus Christ upon Earth.

Dear Children:—In the religious instruction of to-day we come to the question: To where did Jesus betake Himself when He was thirty years old?

When Jesus was thirty years old He repaired to the River Jordan, where he had Himself baptized by John, and thereupon He went into the desert, where He fasted for forty days and forty nights.

To prepare mankind for the appearance of the Redeemer, there appeared six months before John, the son of Zachary and Elizabeth, as the Precursor of the Messias, to prepare the way for Him. John's sermons were earnest and severe. "Do penance," said he, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For now the ax is laid to the root of the tree." John created a great sensation in the whole land, and numbers of people went out to the Jordan to hear him. Those who believed in His teaching were baptized by John. The exterior washing with water was a symbol that the in-

terior should be cleansed from sin. Jesus also came to John and allowed Himself to be baptized by him. But as Jesus was about to enter the water, John sought to prevent Him by saying: "I ought to be baptized by Thee; and comest Thou to me?" But Jesus said: "Suffer it now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice." Then John submitted, and Jesus was baptized by him in the Jordan. As He was baptized the heavens were opened. The Holy Ghost hovered visibly above Him in the form of a dove, and remained upon Him. A voice from heaven was heard saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now Jesus as the Son of God did not require baptism, still He allowed Himself to be baptized:

1. To show His great humility.
2. Thereby to approve and confirm the baptizing by St. John.
3. That He might Himself practice that which He exhorted others to do.

From the Jordan Jesus went into the desert. A desert is a barren tract of land where nothing grows. There Jesus spent forty days and nights in prayer and contemplation, to prepare Himself for His great mission. After He had fasted forty days Satan came to Him in the desert. Presumably he approached Jesus in the form of an angel and said: "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Jesus answered him: "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then the devil took him up into the holy city and set Him on the pinnacle of the Temple, and said: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written: That he hath given his angels charge of thee; and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest, perhaps, thou hurt thy foot against a stone." Jesus said to him: "It is written again: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Again the devil took Him up into a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said: "All these will I give thee, if, falling down, thou wilt adore me." These words betrayed the spirit from the abyss. Jesus spoke with holy displeasure, Depart from me, Satan, for it is written: "The Lord thy God thou shalt adore and him only shalt thou serve." The devil fled full of fear. The angels came and rejoiced at His victory.

The story of the temptation of Jesus has a very deep significance. Christ wished to be tempted because He desired to be like men in

all things; and further He desired to show that no temptation is unconquerable, and that all those who are severely tempted should not be perplexed and discouraged as if something unusual had befallen them. After Jesus left the desert, He began publicly to teach and to gather disciples about Him, from amongst whom He chose twelve as His constant life companions, and He named them His Apostles or messengers. It was a custom and law among the Jews that no one could come forward as a teacher until he was thirty years of age. Jesus, who submitted to every law like a model of obedience, waited for the arrival of this period. He immediately gathered disciples about Him, who listened to His Divine doctrine, and were to spread it over the whole world. Thus two of John's disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned to them and said: What are ye seeking? They answered: Master, where dost thou dwell? Jesus said: Come and see. And they went and stayed that day with Him. Jesus said to Peter and his brother Andrew: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." In the same way James and John, the sons of Zebedee, followed Him. These disciples were for three years the witnesses of His teaching and actions. They were men of humble standing, untaught, simple in their nature, who through the instruction of their Lord and Master and by the power of the Holy Ghost received the knowledge and the courage for their calling.

These chosen ones then He sent forth into all parts of the world to announce the Gospel to all men. All of them, excepting St. John, died a martyr's death, and gave their blood and their life for the truth of their teaching.

What did Jesus teach? "He taught everything that we must believe, hope and do in order to be saved."

Above all things Jesus added His teaching to the revelations of the Old Testament when He said: "I did not come to abolish the law and the prophets (i. e., the revelations and commandments of the Old Testament), but to bring them to perfection. In particular He made reference to the fact that He did not announce His doctrine as man only, but as God and Lord. Jesus founded His rule of conduct upon the supreme law of charity, and indeed upon the love of God and our neighbor when He said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." To the commandment of the love of our neighbor Jesus also adds the commandment of the

love of our enemies when He says: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another." Jesus declares that the greatest drawback to our salvation is the immoderate desire after temporal goods. This appears from the words which Jesus spoke to the rich young man: "If thou wouldst be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, give it to the poor, and then follow me." It is very difficult for those who place their confidence in money to enter into the kingdom of heaven; it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

In so far as the doctrine of Jesus demands of us a strict control of our sensual desires and inclinations, it is hard to observe. Therefore Jesus says: The door is narrow and the way is strait. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and those who use violence carry it away. On the other hand the observance of the teaching of Jesus will become easy, if we make use of those means of grace that Jesus offers us through His church. Therefore Jesus said: "My yoke is sweet and my burden is light." Christ helps us to work out our salvation. He lavishes upon us comfort, refreshment and supernatural strength. Referring to His method of teaching, Jesus liked to speak in Parables, which He often explained. Some of these Parables are, for instance, the "Prodigal Son," the wise and foolish virgins, the sower, the harvest, the unmerciful servant of the merciful king, of the talents, the fig-tree, and so forth.

In what way did Jesus prove that His doctrine was true and Divine?

He proved that His doctrine was true and Divine:

1. By the holiness of His life.
2. By miracles and prophesies.

From what do we perceive the holiness of His life?

Jesus was quite pure from all sin, the most perfect model of all virtues, full of charity toward all men, even toward His worst enemies, and He was obedient to His heavenly Father even unto death upon the cross.

A. Jesus was quite pure from all sin. The Jews, particularly the Scribes and Pharisees, were His bitterest enemies; they watched all His actions. And Jesus approached these, His bitterest enemies with the question: "Who amongst you can accuse me of a sin?" And they remained dumb. Had they known anything

prejudicial about Jesus they would certainly have come forward and upbraided Him with it. Even His judges Pilate and Herod were obliged to declare Him innocent in spite of the accusations and threats of the Jews.

B. Jesus was the most perfect model of every virtue. That which He taught others He practised Himself; that which He required of others, He proved in the highest degree in Himself. No perfection or virtue can be imagined which Jesus did not possess in Himself.

C. Jesus was filled with charity toward all men. For this reason it could be said of Him justly: "His footsteps dropped blessings." Wherever He went trouble and misery fled. Jesus did not care for position or birth, for age or religion; His heart embraced all mankind in charity. He sought to raise sinners up and draw them to Himself, as we see in Magdalene and Zacheus.

D. Jesus loved even His worst enemies. As He hung upon the cross in unspeakable agony, and His enemies heaped derision upon Him, He cried out: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

E. Jesus was obedient to His heavenly Father, even to death upon the cross. Jesus said: "My meat is to do the will of my heavenly Father." In the Garden of Olives Jesus said: "Father not mine, but thy will be done!" 2. Jesus proved the Divinity of His doctrines by miracles and prophecies.

What are miracles?

Miracles are certain extraordinary works which can not be accomplished by natural forces, but only by the omnipotence of God. Miracles, therefore, surpass the powers of nature created by God. When the doctor orders for a patient natural remedies, and the sick person regains his health by degrees, this is natural. But if we say to a man grievously sick, "Arise and be well!" and he rises from his bed cured; or if we tell a dead man in the grave to arise! and he rises alive from the tomb—as Lazarus, for instance—such are miracles. Can you mention some of the miracles that Jesus worked? 1. He turned water into wine; 2. With five loaves He fed over five thousand persons; 3. With a word He calmed the wind and waves, healed all kinds of sicknesses, drove out the devil, and raised the dead to life.

The miracles which Jesus worked may be divided: A.. Into those in which He showed Himself to be Lord over life and death. To

these belong the raising of Lazarus, the young man of Naim and the daughter of Jairus.

B. Those in which He proved Himself Lord over human misery. To these belong the healing of the sick, for instance the ten lepers, the paralytics, those born lame and blind, etc.

C. Those in which He proved Himself as Lord of nature. To these belong the changing of the water into wine, the calming of the storm, the feeding of many thousands with a few loaves and fishes, the abundant catch of fish, etc.

Jesus confirmed also the Divinity of His doctrine by prophecies.

That which will happen in the future is hidden from us. We can in certain cases foresee many things that will happen, but we can not determine them beforehand with certainty. God alone can do this. When therefore Jesus prophesied and His prophecies were fulfilled, it is a proof that He is God. For instance, Jesus told Judas that he would betray Him, and Peter that he would deny Him. Jesus told the Samaritan woman the secret of her heart, and to His disciples, that He would be delivered up to the chief priests and Scribes, and by them condemned to death. Again Jesus foretold His Resurrection, the coming of the Holy Ghost and the persecutions, and the eternal duration of His Church.

Which prophecies of Jesus do we see now fulfilled?

1. That the Gospel would be preached in the whole world;

2. That the Church would never be prevailed against by the powers of hell, and

3. That not one stone would remain upon another in the Temple at Jerusalem.

The apostles and disciples of the Lord went, according to the commands of their Lord and Master, into all parts of the world and preached the Gospel to all nations. Thus in nineteen hundred years the doctrine of Jesus was spread abroad in all parts and countries of the globe. There is to-day in Rome an institution called the Propaganda, in which young men from all parts of the world are instructed, so as to announce later the doctrine of Jesus to those people who are still unconverted heathens. With what fury has not Christianity been persecuted and its annihilation sought after; how many have been tortured on account of their Christian faith, but their blood was the seed which always produced more Christians. The powers of hell itself are not able to overcome the Church. Jesus prophesied the destruction of the city of Jeru-

salem, when His Disciples drew His attention to the magnificence of the Temple: "Seest thou all these great buildings? There shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down."

The city of Jerusalem was taken by the Romans in the year 70 after Christ, and destroyed, the Temple was burned and the place where it had stood made even with the ground. Many thousands of Jews were taken into captivity and dispersed among all nations. Since then they have never been an independent people. With the intention of frustrating the prophecies of Jesus and the Prophets, the apostate emperor Julian decided to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem in the year 363 after Christ. Gladly did the Jews, who hastened from all parts, help in the work of removing the rubbish from the Temple, so that not one stone remained upon another. But when they began to build, terrible flames of fire burst forth from the earth, that killed some of the workmen, and the rest sought safety in flight. This was repeated at every attempt, so that finally the enterprise was abandoned. Contemporary historians, pagan and Christian, bear testimony to this miraculous occurrence.

Application.—Be always diligent and obedient after the example of Jesus; take pleasure in prayer and instruction, and endeavor as you grow older to increase in wisdom and grace, "for I have given you an example," says Jesus.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the life of Jesus Christ upon earth.
2. Where did Jesus betake Himself when He was thirty years of age? when Jesus was thirty years old He went to the river Jordan where He had Himself baptized by John, and thereupon He retired into the desert, where He fasted forty days and nights.
3. How many occurrences are contained in this answer? Two, the Baptism of Jesus and the Temptation of Jesus.
4. Where and by whom was Jesus baptized? In the river Jordan, by John the Baptist.
5. Who was John the Baptist? He was the son of Zachary and Elizabeth.
6. What was John in regard to Jesus? He was His Precursor.
7. What calling, what mission was John's as the Precursor of Jesus? His calling was to prepare mankind for the coming of the Redeemer.
8. How did John fulfil this mission? He taught and preached in the vicinity of the river Jordan.
9. Of what kind were John's sermons? They were earnest and severe.
10. To what did John particularly call the people? To penance.

11. What did John teach of Jesus? John said: "He who is to come after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear."

12. What did John do with those who believed his teaching? He baptized them.

13. Was that Sacramental Baptism? No, it was only a prototype, that mankind should be cleansed from sin.

14. Who also came to John to be baptized? Jesus.

15. What did John say to Jesus? John said: "I ought to be baptized by thee; and comest thou to me?"

16. What did Jesus reply to this? Jesus said: "Suffer it now: for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice."

17. What did John do then? John submitted, and Jesus was baptized by him in the Jordan.

18. What extraordinary thing happened at the Baptism of Jesus? The heavens were opened and the Holy Ghost hovered visibly over Jesus in the form of a white dove, and a voice was heard from the clouds: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him."

19. Did Jesus stand in need of Baptism? No, Jesus did not require Baptism.

20. Why not? Because He was the Son of God, and therefore quite free from all sin.

21. Why then did Jesus allow Himself to be baptized, although He did not need Baptism? Jesus let Himself be baptized: 1. To show His great humility; 2. To give the Baptism by John His approbation, and 3. That He might practice Himself that which He encouraged others to do.

22. To where did Jesus repair after His Baptism? Jesus betook Himself into the desert.

23. What extraordinary event happened to Jesus in the desert? He was tempted.

24. By whom? By the evil spirit.

25. How many times? Three times.

26. What do you know about the first temptation? After Jesus had fasted forty days and nights in the desert, He was hungry. Then Satan approached Him and said: "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

27. What did Jesus reply to this? Jesus said: "Man liveth not alone by bread, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

28. What do you know of the second temptation? Satan took Jesus up into the holy city and set Him on the pinnacle of the Temple, and said to Him: "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down, for it is written: That he hath given his angels charge of thee: and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest, perhaps, thou hurt thy foot against a stone."

29. How did Jesus turn aside this second temptation? Jesus said: "It is written again: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

30. What do you know of the third temptation? Satan took Jesus up into a very high mountain; and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said: "All these will I give thee, if, falling down, thou wilt adore me."

31. How did Jesus reject this temptation? Jesus said: "Begone, Satan; for it is written: The Lord thy God thou shalt adore and him only shalt thou serve."

32. Why did Jesus allow himself to be tempted by Satan? 1. Because He wished to be like men in all things; 2. Because He wished to show us that no temptation is unconquerable, and 3. That all men who would be tempted might not be discouraged, as if something unusual had happened to them.

33. What should we learn from this occurrence? We should learn to overcome steadfastly all temptations to evil.

34. By what are we tempted? 1. By bad thoughts and desires within us; and 2. By wicked men outside us.

35. What should we do when we are tempted by bad thoughts and desires? We should immediately drive them from our minds, and think of something else.

36. If wicked persons try to lead you astray by persuasion what should you do? I should neither believe nor obey their words.

37. What means did Jesus use to turn aside the tempter? Jesus made use of passages from Holy Scripture every time.

38. What does this teach us? The strength and power of the Word of God?

39. To what should this encourage us? We are thereby encouraged to learn to know the Word of God better and better.

40. What becomes of a person who is persuaded to do wrong? He becomes Satan's assistant.

41. What did Jesus do after leaving the desert? He began to teach publicly and to gather His disciples together, of whom He chose twelve as His constant life companions, and called them His apostles or messengers.

42. Why did Jesus first begin to teach in His thirtieth year and not earlier? Because, according to the customs of those times, no one could come forward as a public teacher before that age.

43. What beautiful virtue does Jesus exhibit in this? That of obedience.

44. How many disciples had Jesus? Twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples.

45. Where did Jesus send His apostles? Into all parts of the world.

46. For what reason? To preach the Gospel to all mankind.

47. In order to do this what had to take place beforehand? They were instructed by Jesus.

48. How long did Jesus teach them? For three years.

49. What did Jesus do in order to convince His disciples of the Divinity of His Person and doctrine? Jesus performed miracles.

50. From what rank did Jesus choose His apostles and disciples? From an humble one.

51. What therefore was their whole manner? Perfectly simple and unassuming.

52. Whence did these simple and plain men receive the courage to go into all parts of the world amongst strange people? From the Holy Ghost.

53. Were the apostles convinced of the divinity of the doctrine of Jesus? Yes, they were convinced of it.

54. How do we know this? Because they all with one exception died a martyr's death for the doctrine of Jesus.

55. Who was the exception? St. John.

56. What did Jesus teach? Jesus taught everything that we must believe, hope, and do to be saved.

57. Had not God already revealed in the old Law much that men should believe and do? Yes, God had already revealed in the old Law many things which men were to believe and do.

58. Did Jesus now abolish the revelations and commandments of the old Law? No, He did not abolish them.

59. In what words did He declare this? Jesus said: "I am not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to bring them to perfection."

60. What did Jesus mean to say by this? Jesus meant to imply that he would explain them better.

61. Upon what commandment did Jesus found His rule of conduct? Upon the commandment of the love of God and of our neighbor.

62. What is the chief commandment? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength, with thy whole mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second it like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. These commandments contain the whole Law and the Prophets."

63. Which commandment did Jesus signify as being a new commandment? The commandment of loving our enemies.

64. What do the words of Jesus say? "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another."

65. What did Jesus declare to be the greatest hindrance to our salvation? The inordinate desire of temporal goods.

66. From what narrative may this be seen? From the story of the rich young man.

67. Recite it to me. (The pupil will recite it briefly.)

68. What did Jesus say concerning the rich? "Sooner will a camel pass through the eye of a needle than a rich man enter into the Kingdom of God."

69. What then should men do, as riches, according to the words of Jesus, are a hindrance to salvation? They should not attach their hearts to temporal things.

70. Why? Because men thereby forget God, the Eternal Good.

71. Is it difficult or easy to obey the doctrine of Jesus? It is both easy and difficult.

72. How can you prove to me from Holy Writ that the observance of Christ's doctrine is difficult? Jesus himself said: "The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and only those who use violence will carry it away."

73. But in another passage of the Scriptures Jesus has also said that His doctrine was easy to keep. Do you know that verse? Jesus said: "My yoke is sweet and my burden light."

74. When is the observance of the doctrine of Jesus sweet and light? When we make use of the means of grace.

75. What are these means of grace? The Holy Sacraments which Jesus offers us through His Church.

76. What do these means of grace work in us? They give us supernatural strength.

77. What did I tell you about Jesus' method of teaching? That Jesus frequently spoke in parables or similitudes.

78. What are parables or similitudes? They are narratives or stories of events which did not actually take place, but which are intended to impress upon us a good precept.

79. What did Jesus do so His auditors might understand these parables? Jesus explained these parables Himself.

80. Which parables did Jesus relate to us? That of the talents, the barren fig tree, the prodigal son, the wise and foolish virgins, the sower, the harvest, the unmerciful servant of the merciful king, etc.

81. The chief object of the doctrine of Jesus was to prove to His apostles and disciples that He was Divine. In what way did Jesus prove that His doctrine was true and Divine? He proved it, 1. By the holiness of His life; 2. By His miracles and prophecies.

82. Whence do we perceive the holiness of His life? 1. Jesus was entirely free from all sin? 2. The most perfect model of every virtue, filled with

charity towards all men, even towards His worst enemies, and obedient to His Heavenly Father unto death.

83. In the first place then it is asserted that Jesus was free from all sin. How can you prove this to me? From His own words, when He said once to the Jews: "Is there one among you who can accuse me of sin?"

84. To whom did Jesus address these words? To his bitterest enemies.

85. Who were they? The Scribes and Pharisees.

86. Could His enemies upbraid Him? No.

87. What did Pilate and Herod themselves say when Jesus was led to their tribunal? "We find no guilt in him."

88. What may be inferred from all this? That Jesus was free from all sin.

89. How did Jesus act towards His fellowmen? He was filled with charity towards all.

90. In what manner did Jesus show His charity towards all men? By the great benefits which He rendered them.

91. What does history therefore recount of Jesus? "His footsteps dropped blessings. Wherever He went calamity and misery fled."

92. Did Jesus also love sinners? Yes; Jesus loved sinners, too.

93. In whom can we see this? In Zacheus and Magdalene, the repentant sinner.

94. Why did Jesus associate with sinners? To bring them back to God and make them better.

95. How did Jesus behave towards His enemies? He loved them.

96. To what length did His enemies go with Him? They went so far as to crucify Him.

97. Yet what did Jesus do for them? Jesus prayed for them.

98. How did Jesus pray for them? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

99. What do we learn of Jesus hereby? We learn to love our enemies also.

100. What was Jesus' behavior towards His Heavenly Father? He was obedient to His Heavenly Father unto death upon the cross.

101. How can you prove this? From Holy Scripture where Jesus said: "My meat is to do the will of my heavenly Father."

102. What did Jesus say before His agony in the garden? Jesus said: "Father not mine, but Thy will be done."

103. How did Jesus prove still further the Divinity of His doctrine? By miracles and prophecies.

104. What are miracles? Miracles are those extraordinary works which cannot be accomplished by natural powers, but only by the omnipotence of God.

105. Can you mention some of the miracles that Jesus worked? The changing of water into wine, feeding over five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes, calming the wind and waves with a word, healing all kinds of sicknesses, driving out the devil, and raising the dead to life.

106. Where did Jesus change the water into wine? At the marriage feast in Cana.

107. Where did Jesus feed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes? In the desert.

108. Where did Jesus still the storm at sea? On lake Genesareth or the sea of Galilee.

109. What miraculous healing of the sick did Jesus undertake? Jesus healed the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years, the paralytic, those

born lame, the ten lepers, the servant of the centurion at Capharnum, those born blind, the daughter of the woman of Cana, etc.

110. What dead did Jesus raise up? The young man of Naim, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus.

111. How are the miracles of Jesus divided? 1. Those by which He proved that He was Lord over life and death; 2. Those whereby He proved Himself to be Lord over human misery, and 3. Those by which He proved Himself to be Lord of nature.

112. Can men work miracles, too? No; men cannot work miracles.

113. Why not? Because they are not omnipotent.

114. Yes; but there have already been men who worked miracles, Moses, for instance, who turned his staff into a serpent before the king's eyes, and then stretched his staff over the Red Sea, so that it divided, and with his staff he struck the rock from which water flowed. These miracles were not worked by Moses of his own power, but at the command of God, and through His omnipotence.

115. Was this the case with Jesus? No; Jesus worked miracles by His own power.

116. And what did He prove thereby? That He was the Son of God.

117. How did Jesus prove still further that His doctrine was Divine? By His prophecies.

118. What means: Jesus prophesied? Jesus foretold future events, of which God alone could know.

119. Give an example. The betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter.

120. What else? His Passion and death in Jerusalem, the manner of His death, His Resurrection and Ascension, the persecution of His Church, the mission of the Holy Ghost.

121. Can a man also prophesy? No; he cannot.

122. Why not? Because he is not omniscient.

123. Which of the prophesies of Jesus do we now see being fulfilled? 1. That the Gospel would be preached in the whole world; 2. That the Church should not be prevailed against by the powers of hell, and 3. That not one stone of the 'Temple' at Jerusalem should remain upon another.

124. By whom is the Gospel preached and spread abroad in our days? By missionaries.

125. What is the institution called in Rome where missionaries are instructed? The Propaganda.

126. What took place in the first centuries of Christianity? The Christians were persecuted in the most cruel manner.

127. How long did this persecution continue? It lasted three hundred years.

128. How many of these great persecutions were there? There were ten great persecutions.

129. How many Christians lost their lives thereby? Many hundreds of thousands.

130. Who put an end to these persecutions of the Christians? The Emperor Constantine the Great.

131. In what way? He took the Catholic Church under his protection.

132. Has the Catholic Church had no enemies since that period? Yes; she has had many powerful ones.

133. Who were these enemies? They were heretics who had left the Church and formed their own communities or sects.

134. Did the enemies of the Church succeed in overcoming her? No; they did not succeed.

135. Why not? Because Jesus had prophesied that not even the powers of hell should prevail against the Catholic Church.

136. What other prophecies do we see fulfilled? That of the Temple at Jerusalem not one stone should remain upon another.

137. In what year was the city of Jerusalem captured and destroyed? In the year 70 after Christ.

138. By whom? By the Romans.

139. What took place upon this occasion? The city was burned and the place whereon it stood was made level with the ground.

140. What was the fate of the inhabitants of Jerusalem? They were either taken captive or dispersed into all parts of the world.

141. Who tried to rebuild the Temple? The apostate Emperor Julian.

142. At what period? In the year 363 after Christ.

143. How were his plans frustrated? Terrible flames of fire issued from the ground which killed many of the workmen and the rest took to flight.

144. Was this repeated? Yes; until the Jews relinquished the undertaking.

145. What is the application? Always be diligent and obedient after the example of Jesus, take pleasure in prayer and instruction, and endeavor as you grow older to increase in wisdom and grace.

XXV.

The Fourth Article: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, Dead, and Buried."

Dear Children:—After having spoken in the last two lessons about the life of Jesus upon earth, we come to-day in the explanation of the Catechism to the fourth article of the Creed which says: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."

What does the fourth article of the Creed teach us?

It teaches that Jesus Christ suffered for us, died on the cross, and was laid in the grave.

This article accordingly contains three different points, namely: 1. That Jesus Christ suffered for us, 2. That He died, and 3. That He was buried.

On account of His Passion and death for mankind Jesus is called by St. John the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." The Israelites, we are told, on the day of atonement took two lambs, which by the laying on of hands were supposed to take away the sins of the Israelites. One of these lambs was slaughtered, but the other was driven into the desert. This sacrificial lamb of the old covenant was the prototype of Jesus in the

new convenant, because He took upon Himself the sins of the whole world, i. e., the sins of all mankind, and He died for us. It says of Jesus in the Holy Scriptures: "He was sacrificed," and again, "He gave Himself up to death," and you may perhaps ask which of these is right? Answer: Both expressions are right. (a) He was sacrificed, that means, delivered up to death, 1. By His false apostle Judas, who betrayed Him; 2. By the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, who condemned Him, innocent, to death; 3. By the boundless malice of the Jews, who demanded His death, and finally, 4. By His heavenly Father, out of compassion toward us fallen, sinful men, that He might become our Saviour and Redeemer.

(b) Jesus, however, also sacrificed Himself of His own free will, to make satisfaction to the Divine justice and to save us from everlasting death.

Did Christ suffer as God or as man?

Jesus Christ suffered as man—that is, according to His human nature.

As God, Jesus could not suffer or die, He must therefore have suffered according to His human nature—as man.

Jesus suffered inexpressibly during His whole life. Finally He was made prisoner, reviled, spit upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, and at last nailed to the cross.

Whoever thinks that Jesus only suffered at His death, and in the last days of His life, is very greatly mistaken. The whole life of Jesus was a continual chain of sufferings and afflictions. At His birth in the stable at Bethlehem, He suffered from cold and exposure, poverty and dishonor. At the circumcision He shed His Precious Blood with suffering. During His flight into Egypt Jesus endured the hardships of the journey. Until His thirty-third year He took part with His parents in hard work and poverty.

In His public life, during the three years of His teaching, He was continually exposed to the hatred, enmities, and persecutions of the Pharisees and Jews, who even sought His life.

His soul was filled with a great sorrow that so many persons should remain deaf and hardened to His sacred teaching, although His miracles gave testimony to His Divinity. Filled with anguish He beheld the approaching misery and ruin of His enemies and the city of Jerusalem, inasmuch as He shed tears over them upon more than one occasion. But His sufferings reached their height in the last two days of His life, and the Prophet justly says: "See,

if there be a sorrow like unto my sorrow." Rightly, therefore, is Jesus called the King of Martyrs.

Of His sufferings during the last two days of His life Scripture relates the following: "After Jesus had eaten the Paschal Lamb, and instituted the last supper, He spoke for some time with great affection to His apostles. He promised them the Holy Ghost as comforter. Thereupon He repaired with His Disciples to the Mount of Olives in the Garden of Gethsemani to pray. There His whole Passion passed before His soul. A great agony fell upon Him, and His sweat ran down upon the ground as drops of blood. "Father," He prayed, "if it be possible let this chalice pass from me! Yet not my will, but Thine be done."

Meanwhile Judas the betrayer approached with a number of armed men. Jesus let Himself be taken prisoner, bound and led before the Judge. Here He was mocked, spit upon, and struck in the face with clenched fists, then declared deserving death by the high priests. He was delivered by them to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, who in turn sent Him to King Herod, but He was acknowledged by both to be innocent. Still He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and finally by the persistent importunities of the high priests and the Jewish people, who preferred the murderer Barabbas to Him, He was condemned to death upon the cross. To increase His sufferings Jesus was compelled, though weak and bleeding from a thousand wounds, to carry His cross Himself to Mount Calvary. Exhausted and weakened, He sank three times to the ground under its heavy weight, but was always driven on again with blows and kicks. At last a passer by, Simon of Cyrene, was obliged to help carry the cross.

When He arrived at the summit of Mount Calvary, or Place of Skulls, the soldiers and His brutal executioners tore the clothes from His body and crucified Him.

Where was Jesus Christ crucified?

Upon Mount Calvary, near the city of Jerusalem. The place is called also Golgotha, or Place of Skulls, from the bodies and skulls of the executed buried there. Crucifixion as a means of death was considered at that time the most ignominious death and the most painful. The Saviour selected it to teach us that for the sake of virtue we should not fear the most ignominious death.

Jesus was crucified between two criminals, thieves. This happened:

1. That the prophecies might be fulfilled: He is reckoned amongst evil doers.

2. As a prototype. The penitent thief who repented his misdeeds upon the cross and found mercy, signifies those just persons whom Jesus saves at the judgment and whom He will place at His right hand. The impenitent thief prefigures those persons who die hardened in their sins, and who will one day be eternally damned by God.

How long did Jesus hang upon the cross?

For three hours Jesus hung upon the cross in the most terrible agony of body and soul, until He bowed His head, and died.

What Jesus suffered during these three hours can not be expressed in words. Jesus was fastened to the cross with nails driven through His hands and feet, upon them hung the whole weight of His body, and the slightest motion increased His sufferings indescribably. Besides, the body of Jesus was already covered with wounds from the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the carrying of the cross, and the other ill-treatment He had received. To this inexpressible suffering of the body were now added the blasphemies of the Jews and His enemies. "He helped others," they cried, "but He can not help Himself." "If Thou art the Son of God, descend from the cross!" Of the last three hours of His life, particularly memorable are those seven words which He spoke upon the cross, by which He gave us the most excellent teaching and admonitions.

I. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Thus did Jesus pray for His enemies, to teach us how we should forgive our worst enemies and pray for them.

II. Jesus said to the repentant thief: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise!" to teach us that even the greatest sinners find mercy with God when they turn to Him repenting.

III. To Mary Jesus said: "Behold thy son!" and to John: "Behold thy mother!" to teach us to care for our parents with affection until death.

IV. "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?" We should in all afflictions and abandonment take our refuge in God

V. When Jesus was tormented with a burning thirst He cried aloud: "I thirst!" As Jesus asked for water, so should we thirst after the source of eternal salvation, after virtue and justice, after union with God in celestial bliss.

VI. "It is consummated!" Our Saviour had finished the work

of His mission, the redemption of the world, the victory over death and hell. So also should we not relax in our efforts until our work is ended by death.

VII. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!" O how consoling it is so to live that at the end of life we can commend our soul with confidence into God's hands.

We also profess in the fourth article of the creed that Jesus died and was laid in the grave. Enemies of the Catholic Church and ungodly men not infrequently doubt or even deny the actual death of Jesus, by saying that Jesus was taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb in a state of feigned death. For this reason the Catechism asks: Did Christ really die? The answer says: Yes; His soul was truly separated from His body.

Exhausted unto death Jesus arrived at the place of execution. How great His weakness and fatigue was may be understood from the fact that He had fallen three times beneath the weight of the cross, and had been driven on again by savage blows and kicks from His executioners. Imagine now a body thus lacerated and covered with wounds stretched upon the cross for three long hours, and we must be astonished that Jesus did not yield up His spirit in the first moments after the crucifixion. That Jesus really died upon the cross we know from the following proofs:

1. The Evangelists say unanimously that Jesus departed (died) upon the cross;

2. The rage of His enemies was so great that they could only be satisfied by His death;

3. The executioners did not break His limbs, as was the case with the others put to death, because Jesus was already really dead;

4. When a soldier pierced His side, blood and water flowed therefrom, a sign that death had actually taken place.

5. Pilate would certainly not have allowed Jesus to be taken down from the cross and laid in the grave until the statement made by the soldiers and guards was confirmed, that He was really dead.

What happened at the death of Jesus?

At His death the sun was obscured, the earth quaked, the rocks were split open, the graves opened and the dead arose.

The darkness of the sun at the death of Jesus was miraculous, not a natural phenomenon, for it occurred at the time of the full moon, when a natural eclipse of the sun can not take place.

It was a sign of the mourning of creation over the death of its Creator.

The resurrection of the dead from the open graves was to prove that Jesus died not only for the living but also for the dead.

What does this miracle prove?

It proves that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, as the centurion who stood by the cross remarked to his companions.

In a miraculous and awe-inspiring manner God wished to prove and confirm by visible miracles that He who had just died upon the cross was really the one whom He declared Himself to be, namely, the Son of God. Even the lips of the centurion, a pagan, publicly and loudly confessed what the Jews would not believe: "Verily, He was the Son of God."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's lesson? Of the fourth article of the Creed.

2. What is the fourth article? Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.

3. Who suffered? Jesus Christ.

4. What means: Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate? It means: Jesus suffered during the time that Pontius Pilate was the Roman Governor in Judea.

5. What does the fourth article teach us? It teaches us that Jesus Christ suffered for us, died upon the cross, and was laid in the grave.

6. What did Jesus become through His suffering for us? He became an expiatory sacrifice.

7. What does St. John call Jesus for this reason? He calls Jesus the "Lamb of God" that taketh away the sins of the world.

8. Why is Jesus called by St. John the "Lamb of God"? Because in the old law at the feast of atonement a lamb was driven into the desert and another one was sacrificed, which the Jews believed took away with them their sins.

9. But how could St. John know that Jesus would, like a lamb, take upon Himself the sins of the world? St. John knew this by Divine inspiration.

10. Now, we find in Holy Scripture different sentences about the expiatory death of Jesus. One says: "He was sacrificed," delivered up to death by others, and another says: "He gave himself up to death." Which of these is right? Both sentences are right.

11. By whom was Jesus given up to death? Firstly by Judas, who betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver.

12. Secondly? By the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, who condemned Him, though innocent, to death.

13. Thirdly? By the Scribes and Pharisees, whose boundless malice demanded His death.

14. Fourthly? By His own Heavenly Father.

15. What induced Him to give His only begotten Son up to death? His goodness and mercy toward men.

16. Why did Jesus voluntarily give Himself up to death? To redeem mankind by His death.

17. Was Christ compelled to this by His Heavenly Father? No; He did it of His own free will.

18. Why did He not suffer as God? Because God can not suffer.

19. Why does the Catechism ask particularly whether Jesus suffered as God or as man? Because many believe that it was not hard for Our Saviour to suffer.

20. Why should it not be hard for Him? Because He was not only man but God at the same time.

21. Did Jesus suffer less on this account or not so painfully? No; Jesus did not suffer less pain on this account.

22. What did Jesus suffer? Jesus suffered unspeakably all His life long. At last He was mocked, spit upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, and finally nailed to the cross.

23. What did Jesus suffer, for instance, at His birth in the stable at Bethlehem? He endured cold, exposure, poverty, and humiliation.

24. What did Jesus suffer at His circumcision? He shed His blood under pain.

25. What did Jesus suffer at His flight into Egypt? The hardships of the journey.

26. What did Jesus have to suffer until His thirty-third year? The inconveniences of poverty and hard work in His parents' house.

27. What did Jesus endure during His public teaching office? The hatred of the Jews, the enmities and persecutions of the Pharisees and His other enemies.

28. When did Jesus suffer the most? During the last two days of His life.

29. Where did His passion begin? At the institution of the Last Supper.

30. What did He suffer then—what must have grieved Him greatly upon this occasion? The leave-taking from His apostles, the duplicity and betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, and the timidity of His disciples.

31. To where did Jesus repair after He had taken leave of His disciples? He went to the garden of Gethsemani, on the Mount of Olives.

32. What befell Him there? The agony of death.

33. How great and terrible was this agony? It was so great that He sweated blood.

34. What did Jesus do in His agony? He prayed to His heavenly Father.

35. How did He pray? "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice of suffering pass away. Yet not my will, but Thine be done."

36. What consolation did Jesus receive in His agony? An angel appeared and consoled Him.

37. Meanwhile who was approaching Him? Judas Iscariot, His apostle.

38. With what intention did He enter the Garden of Olives? To betray Jesus.

39. With what? With a kiss.

40. Whom did Judas bring with him? The soldiers and servants of the priests.

41. With what intention did they come? With the intention of taking Jesus prisoner.

42. Could Jesus as Son of God have frustrated His being taken prisoner? Yes, He could have done so.

43. Whence do you know this? When Jesus asked the soldiers and servants of the high priests, "Whom seek ye?" and they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth," He said, full of holy dignity: "I am he!" and at these words, as if struck by lightning, the soldiers and servants fell prostrate upon the ground.

44. What did Jesus wish to prove by this? That they could not have taken Him prisoner if He had not willed it Himself.

45. What did Jesus do? He let them bind Him and take Him prisoner.

46. Where was Jesus led directly after being made prisoner? To the high priest Caiphas, where the chief justices were assembled.

47. What happened there to Jesus? He was falsely accused.

48. What false accusation was brought against Jesus? He was accused of having blasphemed God and of calling Himself the Son of God.

49. What did the high priests make use of to condemn Jesus? They made use of false witnesses.

50. What did the high priests do at this false testimony? They rent their garments and exclaimed, "He is deserving of death!"

51. Where did they take Jesus then? Into the court-yard of the palace.

52. How long did Jesus have to remain there? All night long until the next morning.

53. What did Jesus have to suffer during that time? He was mocked, spit upon, struck in the face with clenched fists, crowned with thorns, and, in mockery, arrayed in a crimson mantle.

54. Where was Jesus taken on the morning after His apprehension? To the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate.

55. What false accusation was here pronounced against Him? He was accused of having instigated the people to revolt.

56. In what way did the Jews try to prove this? They declared that Jesus had forbidden tribute to be paid to Cæsar.

57. How do you know that this accusation was false? When the tributary coin was demanded of Jesus, He said: "Give to God that which is God's, and to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's."

58. Did Pilate yield to this complaint? No; he declared that he found no fault in Jesus.

59. What did he do, however, to appease the anger and animosity of the Jews? He caused Jesus to be scourged.

60. Were His enemies satisfied with this? No; they demanded His death.

61. What did the high priests and Jews do to compel Pilate to condemn Jesus? They threatened to denounce him to the emperor if he gave Jesus His liberty.

62. What did Pilate do then from fear of the Jews? He sentenced Jesus to death.

63. How did Pilate publicly acknowledge that this condemnation was a compulsory and undeserved one? He washed his hands before all the people and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man."

64. What happened when Jesus was condemned to death innocently? He was led to the place of execution.

65. How was Jesus still further tortured on the way? He was made to carry His own cross to Calvary.

66. What took place on the way because of His weakness? He fell three times under the weight of the cross.

67. In what way was He driven on again by His executioners? By blows and kicks.

68. Who was finally obliged to help Jesus carry His cross? Simon of Cyrene.

69. What happened to Jesus when He arrived at the place of execution upon Mount Calvary? He was stripped of His garments and nailed to the cross.

70. How long did Jesus hang upon the cross? For three hours Jesus hung upon the cross in the most awful sufferings of body and soul, until He bowed His head and died.

71. Who was crucified with Jesus? Two thieves.

72. Was this an accident? No; it happened that the prophecy might be fulfilled.

73. What was this prophecy? "He is reputed amongst evildoers."

74. Whom did these two thieves prefigure? The penitent thief signifies those persons who will be pardoned by God at the last judgment.

75. And the impenitent thief? The impenitent thief signifies those who will be damned by God on the last day.

76. What is particularly memorable in the three last hours of the life of Jesus? The seven words which He spoke upon the cross. (The pupil will here repeat them.)

77. Did Jesus really and truly die? Yes. His soul was truly separated from His body.

78. Why does the Catechism ask this question? Because there are unbelievers who say that the death of Christ upon the cross was only feigned.

79. What proofs are there that Christ really died upon the cross? 1. The Evangelists say unanimously that Jesus died upon the cross.

80. The second proof? The rage and hatred of the Jews toward Jesus was so great that they would only have been satisfied with His death.

81. The third proof? The executioners did not break His limbs, because they saw that He was truly dead.

82. The fourth proof? When a soldier pierced His side blood and water flowed out.

83. The fifth proof? Pilate would certainly not have given permission to take the body of Jesus down and lay it in the grave if the soldiers and guards at the cross had not declared that Jesus was dead.

84. What took place at the death of Jesus? At His death the sun was darkened, the earth quaked, the rocks were split, the graves opened and the dead arose.

85. Would such miracles occur at the death of an ordinary man? No; at the death of an ordinary man no such miracles could occur.

86. What then did those miracles at the death of Jesus prove? They prove that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, as the centurion who stood at the cross acknowledged to his soldiers.

87. What led the pagan centurion to make this confession? The miracles of which he was an eye witness.

88. How did it happen that Jesus was sentenced to death by a Roman governor? At that time the Jews were under Roman rule. They were themselves not allowed to condemn a criminal to death.

89. Who alone could do this? The Roman governor, who at that time was Pontius Pilate.

90. How was he forced to pass this unjust sentence upon Jesus? By the threats of the Jews to denounce him to Cæsar.

This will be continued in our next religious instruction.

XXVI.

Continuation of the Fourth Article of the Creed.

Dear Children:—We will now resume the explanation of the fourth article by the question:

Was Christ compelled to suffer death?

No; Christ suffered death of His own free will.

Holy Scripture gives us a proof of this by saying: "He was offered, because it was His own will" (Is. liii. 7). In another part of the Holy Writ Jesus Himself says: "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it up again." Jesus as God omnipotent was not obliged to suffer for us, He did it of His own free will.

Why was it the will of Christ to suffer and die?

In order to satisfy the Divine Justice for our sins and thereby to redeem and save us.

Jesus knew by virtue of His Divine omniscience in to what great misery mankind had fallen through sin; He knew that to propitiate the Infinite Majesty of God an Infinite satisfaction was necessary, which no man or no finite being could render. Man's misery grieved Him. From compassion and kindness toward mankind He left heaven, became Incarnate, suffered and died for us, in order to render satisfaction to the Divine Justice, to redeem man and to save him.

For this reason Holy Scripture says: "He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins." Never, therefore, let the thought arise in you that Jesus was crucified like a malefactor for His own guilt, for you know indeed that Jesus as the Most Holy was free from all guilt.

For what sins has Christ given satisfaction?

For the sins of the whole world, namely, for original sin and all the other sins of mankind.

Jesus by His death atoned for those sins which as general guilt oppress the whole human race as well, as for those which one commits personally. By the sins of "the whole world" we understand the sins of all mankind. Jesus took upon Himself the sins and the eternal punishment for sin of all mankind and removed them

by His Passion and death. He effaced them completely, blotted them out as if they had never taken place.

That you may understand this still better I will give you a parable. Imagine that the sins of all mankind were written down by God in a large account book. What do we do when we no longer wish to see that which has been written down? We efface it. So long as our sins were not effaced before God, they were present to the sight of the Divine Majesty, and we were guilty. Then God effaced all our sins, as it were, with the blood of His only begotten Son, who sacrificed Himself for us.

Now another question is this: "Why did Jesus suffer so much and so terribly?" One single drop of His Precious Blood would have worked our redemption, and the least act of Jesus would have reconciled us with God.

But Jesus wished to suffer:

1. To show us how great His love for mankind was;

2. To show us how great the malice of sin is; and

3. To animate us to bear the greatest sufferings and pains with patience and resignation.

From what has Christ redeemed us by His sufferings and death?

He has redeemed us, 1. From sin; 2. From the slavery of the devil who had subdued us by sin; and 3. From eternal damnation, which we had deserved by sin.

The first blessing then of redemption is deliverance from sin; for through the merits of Jesus Christ we not only obtain forgiveness of our sins committed, but also the grace of justification, and besides sanctifying grace also actual grace to lead a God-fearing life. Between God and man there was a chasm, a wall of separation was erected, for as soon as man had turned away from God by sin, he lost also the love and good grace of God. By His death of expiation, Jesus removed the wall between God and man, and reconciled God with man again.

Further Jesus has redeemed us from the slavery of Satan. As one who serves a king is his servant or subject, so man, by falling away from God and sinning, was in the slavery of Satan. From this profoundly miserable and deplorable condition did Jesus redeem us. He delivered us from the bonds in which as it were the whole human race through the cunning of the evil one were ensnared. He opened the dungeon and gave us the blessed freedom of becoming the children of God.

Finally Jesus also redeemed us from eternal damnation. Without the sufferings and death of Jesus we should have shared with the evil one in eternal damnation, because we should have remained children of Satan. Whosoever cooperates with the graces of redemption which Christ merited for us by His Passion, can gain heaven and escape thereby everlasting perdition. He who lives with Jesus, keeps His commandments, imitates Him in all things, and makes use of His means of grace, can not be separated from God. For this reason the Holy Scripture says: "God so loved the world that He even gave His only begotten Son, that all who believe in Him might not be lost, but have everlasting life."

What more has Christ gained for us through His sufferings and death?

He has, 1. Reconciled us with God; 2. Reopened heaven to us; and 3. Merited abundant graces for us, in order to enable us to lead a holy life and to obtain eternal happiness.

Jesus has, therefore, 1. Reconciled us to God.

A reconciliation takes place between two persons who were enemies. The one who prepares this reconciliation and brings it about is called a mediator. Jesus Christ is this Mediator. Through sin men had become enemies of God, and they had lost the love and friendship of God. Then Jesus was the Mediator between God and man. He took our guilt upon Himself, He paid as it were what we owed to God. He appeased the offended majesty of God, and rendered satisfaction through His death of expiation.

Without the mediation of Jesus, the wrath of God would never have been removed from us.

Hence Holy Scripture says: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rom. v. 10).

2. Jesus reopened heaven to us.

However, you must not take this in a literal sense, as if there had been a closed door to heaven. As a man closes his house to his enemy, and as a disobedient child who has rebelled against his father is no longer permitted to enter the paternal abode, so in consequence of sin no one could enter heaven, and without Jesus' death of expiation heaven would have remained closed forever. Jesus appeased the just Father again, and God, reconciled by the merits of the death of sacrifice of His Son, allowed grace to take the place of justice, and forgave His guilty children and reopened to them heaven, the paternal house. The cross was as it were the key wherewith the closed door of heaven was reopened.

3. Jesus merited abundant graces for us in order to enable us to lead a holy life and to obtain eternal happiness. As from a spring, refreshment flows for the thirsty, so is Jesus' death of sacrifice an abundant source of grace for us. Every one who thirsts for His salvation can come and refresh himself at this source. It flows for all men, and no one will be refused.

It was not sufficient for Jesus, by His Incarnation, to become our brother, by His death of sacrifice our Lord and Redeemer, He wished by His merits to be also our blessing, the cause of our eternal salvation.

Has Christ merited grace and eternal salvation for those only who will really be saved?

No; He has merited it for all men, without exception, as He died for all without exception.

This question ought not to appear strange to you. A heretic named Calvin had taught, namely, that God had destined a part of mankind, without their fault, to eternal damnation, the other part, without their fault, to everlasting happiness. The former, therefore, might do as much good as they would, they would still be damned, and those destined to blessedness might do as much evil as they wanted to, they would still go to heaven. This is a heresy contrary to the justice of God. How could it be possible that God would eternally damn good men, and make bad men eternally happy? God has not only created and destined all men for eternal happiness, but Jesus also died for all men, and all men obtain as much grace as they will need to save them.

Holy Writ gives us a proof of this in saying: "A Mediator is between God and men—Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for the redemption of all." In another part it says: "Jesus is the sacrifice of atonement for our sins, yet not for our sins alone, but for the sins of the whole world."

If Christ has merited eternal salvation for all men, why, then, are not all saved?

Because not all do, on their part, what is necessary for obtaining salvation; that is, because they do not all believe, keep the commandments, and use the means of grace. If, therefore, all men are not saved, the fault lies with them, and not with God. If you offer bread to a hungry man, it is his own fault if he refuses it and starves. If you offer water to a thirsty man, and he will not take it, it is certainly his own fault if he is parched with thirst.

When a physician orders medicine for a sick man, who does not take it, the patient bears the blame if he should die. If there is a treasure buried in a field, he alone finds it who digs for it. If you hold out a saving hand to a drowning man and he does not grasp it, it is his own fault if he sinks and is drowned. If, then, any one wants to be saved, he must not fold his hands idly in his lap, but he must cooperate with God's graces; he must believe, keep the Divine Commandments and make use of the means of grace which Christ has ordained for our salvation. To many the doctrine of Jesus seems absurd. From pride they will not subject their reason to the faith. Others obey their own will rather than the will of God. Others again can not detach their hearts from temporal affairs. Their cares, their troubles, their earthly goods stifle the thought of their eternal salvation. Again, there are others who believe that they can work out their salvation by their own strength, and they do not seek the means of grace that God has ordained for our salvation. For this reason also Holy Scripture says: "Not every one that saith to me Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only he who doth the will of my heavenly Father." Neither is heaven opened for us at our mere wish, but we must advance toward the grace of God and cooperate with it. The holy Doctor St. Augustine says: "God has indeed created thee without thy concurrence, but He will not save thee without it." Hence Jesus said: "If thou wouldst enter into everlasting life, keep the commandments."

The bitter Passion and death of Jesus Christ obliges us to love and show our gratitude to Him. That man is unloving and ungrateful, who forgets or does not value the graces and blessings of which he is made partaker through the Passion and death of the Son of God. We have certain means at hand to remind us thereof. Above all the crucifix reminds us of the death of Jesus.

Now, crucifixes may be found in many places: in church, at home, and in some countries in the streets and byways. The stations of the cross likewise remind us of the story of Christ's sufferings. The celebration of Good Friday reminds us of the day upon which our Divine Redeemer died, for which reason also the Church has set Friday apart as a day upon which to abstain from flesh meat, partly to recall to our memory the Passion of Jesus, partly to give us an opportunity to return thanks to our Saviour for His sufferings.

Never forget, then, the exceeding great love which moved Jesus to come from heaven to this earth, to become Incarnate, and on account of our sins to suffer so much and so severely. But let this love be living in you, and promise to live for Him who died for your sake. Avoid sin, for in Jesus' sacrifice of expiation you can see what a terrible thing sin is in God's sight. The Passion of Jesus and His agonizing death upon the cross should make your own adversities seem but small to you, for Jesus suffered innocently; men, however, deserve what they have to suffer.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? We have continued the explanation of the Fourth Article of the creed.

2. Was Christ compelled to suffer death? No; Christ suffered death of His own free will.

3. How can you give me a proof of this? From Holy Scripture.

4. What says the text which I gave you? "He was offered because it was His own will."

5. What says the other text? "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from me: but I lay it down of myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again."

6. What then does it mean, Christ suffered death of His own free will? It means that Jesus was not compelled to do so by any one.

7. Why could not Jesus be compelled? Because He was God.

8. Why did Jesus will to suffer and die? Jesus willed to suffer and die to make satisfaction to the Divine justice for our sins and thereby to redeem and save us.

9. By what was the justice and majesty of God so grievously outraged? By original sin and innumerable other sins of men.

10. What had all men lost by sin? The grace and love of God.

11. What had mankind deserved for their sins? They merited everlasting punishment.

12. What did Christ do to efface our guilt before God? He took upon Himself the guilt and the punishment of all sins and He died for us.

13. What did Jesus prove for us by His death and Passion? Jesus proved how great His love for men was.

14. What did Jesus become for us through His death? Jesus became the sacrifice of expiation for the sins of the whole world.

15. What, therefore, does Holy Writ say of the Passion and death of Jesus? Holy Writ says: "He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins."

16. Give another passage of Scripture? "He has loved us and washed us from our sins with his blood."

17. For what sins has Christ given satisfaction? For the sins of the whole world, original sin and all the other sins of mankind.

18. Whence can you prove this to me? From Holy Scripture, which says: "Christ is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for those of the whole world."

19. What means the expression: sins of the whole world? It means for the sins of all mankind.

20. Could no one but Christ make full reparation for our sins? No; no one could do this.

21. Why not? Because the justice of God demanded an infinite satisfaction, which a finite being could not give.

22. From what has Christ redeemed us by His sufferings and death? He has redeemed us 1. From sin; 2. From the slavery of the devil; and 3. From eternal damnation.

23. How did Jesus redeem us from sin? He took upon Himself the guilt and the punishment of all sin and He died for us.

24. Why then did Jesus suffer so much and so greatly to redeem us from our sins? 1. To show us how great His love was for mankind. 2. To show us how great is the malice of sin in God's sight, and 3. To encourage us to endure the greatest sufferings with patience.

25. From what else did Jesus redeem us? From the slavery of Satan.

26. How did mankind become slaves of Satan? By the sin of our first parents.

27. What did all men become through sin? Servants and slaves of Satan.

28. Who then redeemed mankind from this terrible state? Our Saviour Jesus Christ.

29. By what? By His death upon the cross.

30. Why do we say that Jesus redeemed us also from eternal damnation? Because all men would have suffered eternal damnation if Jesus had not died for us.

31. Why would they have had to suffer eternal damnation? Because they were all children of Satan.

32. What more has Christ gained for us through His sufferings and death? He has 1. Reconciled us with God; 2. Reopened heaven to us; and 3. Merited abundant graces for us, in order to enable us to lead a holy life, and to obtain eternal happiness.

33. With whom has Christ reconciled us? Christ reconciled us with God.

34. Between whom can reconciliation take place? Between persons who are enemies.

35. Did enmity exist between God and man? Yes; through the first sin, enmity existed between God and mankind.

36. What is that one called who brings about a reconciliation between enemies? He is called a Mediator.

37. How did Jesus become our Mediator? He appeased the anger of God, and made God our friend again.

38. Why does it say: Jesus reopened heaven to us? Because through sin heaven was closed against mankind.

39. How are we to understand this? That no man could enter into heaven.

40. How did Jesus open heaven to man? By the merits of His death of atonement mankind could enter again into heaven.

41. What else did Jesus gain for us by His death? He merited abundant graces for us that we might be enabled to live a holy life and be eternally happy.

42. Is it sufficient for man to be free from sin only? No; he must also do good.

43. What do we require, however, for this? For this we require the Divine grace.

44. Why? Because of our own strength we can do no good.

45. How do we participate in the abundant graces merited for us by Jesus Christ? Through the Holy Sacraments.

46. For whom did Christ merit these abundant graces? He merited them for all mankind.

47. Is no one excepted? No one is excepted.

48. Has Christ merited grace and eternal salvation for those only who really will be saved? No; He has merited for all men without exception, as He died for all without exception.

49. Why does the Catechism ask this question? Because a heretic named Calvin taught that God had destined a part of mankind without fault of theirs to eternal damnation, and the other part He had destined to eternal happiness.

50. Why is this a heresy? Because it is contrary to God's justice.

51. How is it contrary to the justice of God? Because all good men will go to heaven and all wicked men to hell.

52. But why will not all be saved? Because not all do on their part what is necessary for obtaining salvation: that is, because they do not all believe, keep the Commandments, and use the means of grace.

53. What then does God demand of every man who wants to be saved? God demands his cooperation.

54. In what does this cooperation consist? Man must 1. Believe; 2. Keep the Commandments; and 3. Use the means of grace which God has appointed for our salvation.

55. Do all men do that which God demands of them? No; they do not.

56. Why do they not believe? Because they will not subject their reason to Faith.

57. Why do they not keep the Commandments? Because they prefer their own will to the will of God.

58. Why do they not use the means of grace? Because they think that they can do good by their own strength.

59. What, therefore, is the cause if all men are not saved? It is man's own fault.

60. What is the application with which the Catechism concludes? "Never forget how much Jesus has loved you, and what He has suffered for you."

61. What reminds us first of all of the death of Jesus? Every crucifix or picture of the cross.

62. Where do we see crucifixes? In churches, in cemeteries, in our homes.

63. What reminds us of the whole story of Christ's Passion? The stations of the cross.

64. What devotions do we perform during Lent? Devotions to commemorate the Passion of Jesus.

65. What has the Catholic Church commanded to thank Jesus for His death of sacrifice? The Catholic Church has commanded that we abstain from flesh meat on Fridays.

66. What reminds us in Holy Week of Jesus being laid in a sepulcher? The repositories for the Blessed Sacrament which are erected then in the Catholic Churches.

67. On what account did Jesus die? On account of the sins of mankind.

68. What, therefore, does every one do who sins? He nails Jesus to the cross anew.

69. What then must you avoid? Sin.

70. Must you one day suffer and die? Yes; I, too, will have to suffer and die one day.

71. Who should be our model in all sufferings and death? Our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

72. What did He say upon the cross? It is consummated! Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!

And this is what you should say at death.

With the hope that you may never forget the bitter Passion and death of Jesus, and that Jesus may not have died for you in vain, we will conclude the religious instruction for to-day, and should Divine Providence have destined you also to suffer much in your life and to carry a heavy cross, look upon the Lamb of Sacrifice, bleeding upon the cross innocently for the sin of others. His Passion will be your consolation, and as Jesus hangs upon the cross with outstretched arms, as if He would embrace us, so will He one day receive into the wound of His opened side all those who in this world have suffered and died according to His example.

XXVII.

The Fifth Article: "He Descended into Hell, the Third Day He Rose Again from the Dead."

Dear Children:—In the explanation of the Catechism we come to-day to the fifth article of the Creed: "He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead." This article contains two points:

(a) That Jesus descended into hell; and

(b) That Jesus upon the third day rose again from the dead.

The Catechism asks: "What means He descended into hell?"

It means that the soul of Jesus after His death descended into "Limbo"—i. e., to the place where the souls of the just who died before Christ were detained.

The word hell has, according to Scripture and the language of the Church, a threefold meaning:

(a) It signifies a place where the damned, i. e., those who die in mortal sin, suffer eternally. From out this hell there is no redemption.

(b) It signifies that place where the souls who departed in venial sin must remain for a time in Purgatory, until God vouchsafes to admit them to everlasting happiness.

(c) It signifies the place where those just souls who departed this life before Christ awaited the day of redemption.

To this place the soul of Jesus betook itself after the soul departed from the body upon the cross. The following passage of Scripture has reference to this: "He was put to death indeed in the flesh, but enlivened in the spirit; in which also coming He preached to those spirits that were in prison"—that is, announced to them their redemption (1 Pet. iii. 18-19). Limbo is here called a prison because the souls of the just who were shut out from the vision of God were detained here, until they were redeemed by the merits of Jesus' death of expiation.

Why were the souls of the just detained in Limbo?

"Because heaven was closed through sin, and was first to be opened by Christ." It is an article of faith that original sin shuts us out from the vision of God. After the fall of our first parents, the celestial Paradise, heaven, was closed, even to the just souls of the old law.

As a large stone was rolled before the tomb of Jesus, to render His Resurrection impossible, so, as it were, a large stone had been placed before the gate of heaven. This was original sin which was perpetuated from Adam upon all mankind. Through the death of Jesus this obstacle was removed. When Jesus made satisfaction to God for the sins of the world, heaven was reopened to man.

Why did Christ descend into Limbo?

1. To comfort and set free the souls of the just;

2. To show forth His power and majesty even there in the lower regions.

For centuries and centuries must the souls of the just who died before Jesus have pined in Limbo, shut out from the vision of God. As one parched with thirst longs for water, so did those just souls in their sadness and affliction long for union with God. Therefore, after Jesus had accomplished His sacrifice of expiation upon the cross, His soul betook itself into Limbo, to announce to these just souls their deliverance. As a prisoner longs for liberty, for fresh air, and sun, so did those just souls in Limbo long for their deliverance, for their union with God. This deliverance was now announced to them by Jesus Himself.

3. To show forth His power and majesty even there in the lower regions.

Jesus desired to show His power and majesty even in the lower

regions, that is to say, the kingdom of spirits, for Holy Scripture says: "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. ii. 10). The doctrine that Jesus descended into Limbo should 1. Encourage us to persevere in our hope and in our confidence in the Divine promises, and not to be discouraged and vacillating if God's assistance is delayed for some time. It should 2. Encourage us to be compassionate toward our unhappy fellow men, and lavish as much consolation and help upon them as lies in our power.

Did the soul of Jesus remain in Limbo?

No; upon the third day it was reunited with His body and Jesus arose gloriously from the grave, as He had foretold, when He said: "Destroy the temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

In commemoration of this we celebrate Easter day. The resurrection of Jesus was prefigured in the Old Testament by the Prophet Jonas, who had to pass three days in the belly of a whale. Scripture relates to us the following about the Resurrection of Jesus: "On the morning of the third day (after the death of Jesus) there was a great trembling of the earth. An angel of God descended from heaven, approached the tomb, rolled back the stone and seated himself thereon. His countenance dazzled like lightning and his raiment was whiter than snow. The guards were benumbed with fright and fell upon the ground as if dead. But Jesus came forth glorious and immortal from the grave.

Of the Resurrection of Jesus you must know now:

1. That Jesus was not awakened by God, but that He rose from the grave through His own power. We shall rise from the grave also at the last day, but not like Jesus, by our own power, but through the omnipotence of God.

2. That the body of Jesus after His Resurrection was incapable of suffering and immortal. Therefore we say that Jesus arose from the dead with a glorified body, a body like that which the Disciples beheld at His transfiguration upon Mount Thabor. Still Jesus retained in His glorified body the marks of His wounds, as a proof that He rose again with that same body which had suffered and died.

Did the enemies of Jesus know that He would rise again?

Yes; Jesus had foretold it; for this reason they sealed the tomb, and placed a guard before it.

Already in the Old Testament the Resurrection of Jesus was fore-

told by the Prophet David: "My flesh shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Jesus Himself spoke of His Resurrection beforehand. "The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of His enemies, and they will put Him to death; but when He is put to death, He will rise again the third day." As the enemies of Jesus knew of His Resurrection, they rolled a heavy stone to the opening of the tomb, sealed it, and placed a guard before it. If the grave had not been guarded they could have said that the dead body of Jesus had been stolen. But through a wise dispensation of God all suspicion of a deception was avoided. The soldiers keeping guard were witnesses of His Resurrection.

We have now to prove that Jesus really rose again from the dead?

1. The irrefutable proof is this: His Disciples often saw Him after His Resurrection, touched Him, ate, spoke, and conversed with Him, and suffered death to confirm His Resurrection.

Holy Scripture enumerates ten appearances of Jesus after His Resurrection. Even a Disciple of Jesus, named Thomas, doubted His Resurrection. Jesus convinced him, however, and said: "Put in thy finger hither (into the place of the nails), and see my hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side" (John xxii. 27).

Thus Jesus appeared to two Disciples who were going to Emmaus, explained the Scripture to them, sat at table with them, blessed the bread, broke it and gave it to them.

2. The Apostles proclaimed His Resurrection everywhere and gave their lives for this truth.

Peter said fearlessly to the Jews: "You nailed him to the cross by the hands of the ungodly and put him to death. God has awakened him; of this we are all witnesses."

How long did Jesus remain upon earth after His Resurrection?

He remained upon earth forty days.

What did He do meanwhile?

He conferred upon His apostles, especially upon Peter, various powers and instructions for the good of His Church. Jesus appeared once to His Disciples as they sat at table. At this appearance He gave them the power to remit sins or to retain them.

Then He appeared to His Disciples as they were fishing on Lake Tiberius. Upon this occasion He conferred upon Peter the guardianship of His Church with the words: "Feed my lambs! Feed my sheep!"

At a subsequent appearance upon the mountain in Galilee He

conferred upon them the power and the commission to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world and to baptize the faithful, and He promised them perpetual assistance until the end of the world, namely, the Holy Ghost.

What effect ought the doctrine of the Resurrection of Jesus to produce in us?

It ought 1. To strengthen our belief in His Divinity, and our hope of our own future resurrection; and 2. To incite us to rise from the death of sin to a new and holy life.

1. The Resurrection of Jesus is the greatest of His miracles, inasmuch as He thereby showed Himself as the conqueror over death and the grave. He proved thereby the Divinity of His Person and also the Divinity of His doctrine. Jesus Himself gives His Resurrection to the Scribes and Pharisees as a sign of His Divinity: "This generation is a wicked generation: They ask a sign, and a sign shall not be given them, but the sign of Jonas the prophet."

The Resurrection of Jesus should strengthen us also in the belief in our own resurrection. St. Paul the apostle says: "If Christ is risen so also shall we rise again, and as in Adam all died, so also in Christ will all live again." If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ also is not risen.

2. The Resurrection of Jesus should incite us to rise from the death of sin to a new life. The life of a sinner is spiritual death. He who lives in the state of sin and disgrace, who has lost the grace and friendship of God, is according to the state of his soul, dead, and in a spiritual manner lies in his grave. But the Resurrection of Jesus should encourage us to leave the grave of sin, to renounce sins and passions, evil desires and habits and to begin a new, God-fearing life.

All men will rise again one day, but not all alike. Only the bodies of the good will at their resurrection resemble the glorified body of Jesus. Therefore the application says "Reflect what St. Paul says: 'That as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life'" (Rom. vi. 4). The life of the sinner resembles the sleep of a man in a boat that is tossed about, that is being driven toward a yawning abyss, a waterfall.

The sleeper is dreaming perhaps a pleasant, sweet dream; but alas! if he does not awaken in good time and save himself, the little skiff will be suddenly plunged into the abyss and the dreamer will be swallowed up by the wild waves. Dear children, do not be led

astray by the bad example of the world. If others are hurrying toward the abyss, that is no reason why you should do so. He who is once ensnared in the chains of sin can only with difficulty extricate himself again. Should you, however, be so unhappy as to fall into sin, Oh do not delay to return from this dangerous path. He who continues thereon goes most surely toward perdition. The Catholic Church lets the forty days of Lent and penance precede the feast of Easter, and exhorts us during this time in an earnest voice to do penance in dust and ashes, to put off the old man, and to put on the new, so that with the Resurrection of Jesus we may celebrate also our resurrection from the death of sin. Never let this admonition of the Catholic Church pass you by unheeded, and as in the Church there is joy over the Resurrection of Our Saviour, so will there be joy in heaven over the resurrection of the sinner from spiritual death. As Jesus rose from the grave glorious and immortal, so then will our resurrection be a joyful one to life everlasting.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the fifth article of the creed.

2. What says this fifth article? It says: "He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead."

3. Who descended into hell, and rose again from the dead? Jesus Christ.

4. How many truths are contained in this article? It contains two truths: 1. That Jesus descended into hell, and 2. That Jesus on the third day rose again from the dead.

5. What means "He descended into hell?" It means that the soul of Jesus Christ, after His death, descended into "Limbo"—*i. e.*, to the place where the souls of the just who died before Christ were detained.

6. Does it mean that hell where the souls of the damned are? No; it does not mean that hell.

7. What is Limbo also called? It is called a prison.

8. Why? Because the souls of the just were there shut out from the vision of God.

9. How long were they shut out? Until they were redeemed by the death of Jesus.

10. Why were the souls of the departed just in Limbo? Because through sin heaven was closed against them, and was only to be opened by the death of Christ.

11. What means heaven was closed? It means that no one could enter into heaven.

12. Through what was heaven closed against mankind? Through the sin of our first parents.

13. To whom was heaven closed? To all men.

14. For the just also who lived before Jesus? Yes; heaven was also closed to the just.

15. Why did Christ descend into Limbo? 1. To comfort and set free the souls of the just; and 2. To show forth His power and majesty even there in the lower regions.

16. Who has need of comfort? The unhappy and the suffering.

17. Were the souls of the just unhappy and suffering? Yes; their unhappiness and suffering consisted in their being shut out from the vision of God.

18. How long had this lasted? Many thousands of years.

19. In what consisted the comfort that Jesus brought them? In this, that He set them free from Limbo.

20. What then must the souls of the just have experienced when Jesus announced to them their redemption? They must have experienced great joy.

21. How did Jesus descend into Limbo, with His body or with His soul? With His soul.

22. Where did His body lie during this time? It laid in the grave.

23. What was the second reason why Jesus descended into Limbo? To show forth His power and majesty even there in the lower regions.

24. To whom had Jesus already shown His glory upon earth? To the living.

25. To what should the truth that Jesus descended into Limbo encourage us? 1. To persevere in our hope in the Divine promises and 2. To be compassionate toward our unfortunate fellow men and to render them as much consolation and assistance as lies in our power.

26. How long a time elapsed from the promise of a Redeemer which God gave to our first parents until it was fulfilled? A period of four thousand years.

27. Did God's promise, however, remain unfulfilled? No; it was fulfilled.

28. What do we learn therefrom? That we should not be discouraged and become pusillanimous when God's assistance is sometimes delayed.

29. Did the soul of Jesus remain always in Limbo? No; upon the third day it united itself to His body, and Jesus rose gloriously from the grave.

30. Had Jesus foretold His Resurrection from the dead? Yes; Jesus said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

31. What did Jesus mean by the destroyed temple? He meant thereby His body, which on the third day was to rise again from the grave.

32. By whom was the Resurrection of Jesus prefigured in the Old Testament? By the prophet Jonas, who for three days lay in the belly of a whale.

33. What feast has the Catholic Church instituted to commemorate the Resurrection of Jesus? Easter day.

34. Can you repeat anything from the story of the Resurrection of Jesus? On the morning of the third day after the death of Jesus there was a great trembling of the earth. An angel of God descended from heaven, went to the grave, rolled back the stone, and seated himself upon it. His countenance was as dazzling as lightning and his raiment was as white as snow. The guards were benumbed from fright and fell to the earth as if dead. Jesus, however, proceeded from the grave immortal and glorious.

35. Did Christ rise from the grave through His own power or was He aroused from death by God? Christ rose from the dead by His own power.

36. How was this possible? Because Jesus as God is omnipotent.

37. What difference is there between the Resurrection of Jesus and our own future resurrection? Jesus rose from the grave by His own power, but we shall one day rise from the grave through God's omnipotence.

38. Was the body of Jesus after His Resurrection just as it was before His Resurrection? No; after the Resurrection of Jesus His body was incapable of suffering and immortal; it was a glorified body.

39. Had the Disciples already seen the body of Jesus in a glorified form? Yes; upon Mount Thabor.

40. How does Scripture describe His glorified body? Scripture says: "His countenance shone like the sun, and his garments were white as snow."

41. What has Jesus retained in His glorified body? The marks of His wounds in hands, feet, and side.

42. Why has Jesus done this? To prove that He rose from the dead with the same body with which He suffered.

43. Did the enemies of Jesus know that He would rise again? Yes; Jesus had foretold it; for this reason they had sealed the grave, and placed a guard there.

44. Why did they do this? So as to prevent the Resurrection of Jesus.

45. By whom was the Resurrection of Jesus prophesied in the Old Testament? By the prophet David.

46. With what words? "My flesh shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell."

47. With what words did Jesus Himself foretell His Resurrection? Jesus said: "The Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of His enemies, and they will put him to death: but when he is put to death he will rise again on the third day."

48. Why was it well that the enemies of Jesus placed a guard at His grave? Because otherwise they might have said that the body of Jesus had been stolen.

49. Whence do we know that Christ really rose from the dead? From the testimony of His Disciples, who often saw Him after His Resurrection, touched Him, ate, spoke, and conversed with Him, and in confirmation thereof suffered death.

50. How many appearances of Jesus does Scripture enumerate. Scripture enumerates ten.

51. Which of the Disciples doubted the Resurrection of Jesus? Thomas doubted it.

52. How did Jesus convince him? Jesus said to him: "Put in thy finger hither (into the place of the nails) and see my hands: and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side."

53. How long did Jesus remain upon earth after His Resurrection? He remained upon earth forty days.

54. What did He do meanwhile? He conferred upon His apostles, especially upon Peter, various powers and instructions for the good of His Church.

55. What powers did He confer upon Peter? He made him the head of His Church and delivered to him the highest authority in the Church.

56. What commands and instructions did Jesus give to His apostles? That they should go into the world and preach the Gospel, and that they should baptize all those who believed it.

57. What power did He charge them with and give them? The power to forgive sins and to retain them.

58. What is this power called? The power to bind and to loose.

59. What did Jesus promise His Disciples? He promised them the Holy Ghost, who would teach them all things and remain with them until the end of the world.

60. What effect ought the doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ to produce in us? It ought 1. To strengthen our belief in His Divinity and our

hope of our own future resurrection; and 2. To incite us to rise from the death of sin to a new and holy life.

61. The Resurrection of Jesus should therefore strengthen our belief in the Divinity of Jesus. Which of the Divine attributes did Jesus prove by His Resurrection? 1. His omniscience and 2. His omnipotence.

62. Why His omniscience? Because He had prophesied His Resurrection beforehand.

63. Why His omnipotence? Because Jesus rose from the grave through His own power.

64. What consoling hope do we draw from the Resurrection of Jesus? The hope that we, too, shall one day rise again.

65. May all men rejoice in the resurrection? No; only the good.

66. What men must be afraid of the resurrection? The wicked.

67. Why? Because they know that they will rise to eternal damnation.

68. When shall we rise? At the last day.

69. How shall we rise? As we have lived.

70. Explain this more exactly. The just will rise with a glorified body, like unto the glorified body of Jesus Christ, but the wicked will not.

71. To what can we therefore compare the body of man, as it will one day rise from the grave? To a grain of wheat.

72. What must you do, that you also may rise with a glorified body? We must not do wrong.

73. What does sin make of the human body? It makes it an instrument of vice.

74. Why? Because the body does the evil which the soul wills.

75. But if you have had the misfortune to fall into sin, *i. e.*, to commit a grievous sin, what must you do? I must do penance and amend.

76. What is this called? It is called a spiritual resurrection.

77. What is a man in a state of sin? He is spiritually dead.

78. Why? Because he lives in a state of disgrace with God.

79. How is man reawakened to the spiritual life? When he is converted and becomes a better man.

80. What does the life of a sinner resemble? It resembles the sleep of a man in a boat tossed by the waves, which is being driven toward the abyss.

81. If a man does not awaken in good time from his sleep of sin, what happens? He is lost eternally.

82. What feast has the Catholic Church instituted in commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus? Easter day.

83. In order that men may celebrate their own resurrection with the Resurrection of Jesus, what season does the Church allow to precede the feast of Easter? The forty days of Lent.

84. What does the Church ask of us during this season? She exhorts us to do penance and amend.

85. How should you employ the holy season of Lent every year? Do penance and amend.

86. If you do this what kind of resurrection may you hope for one day? A glorious resurrection.

87. To what will you rise then? To eternal life.

And that this may really happen, may God grant us His blessing.

XXVIII.

The Sixth Article: "He Ascended into Heaven, Sitteth at the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty."

Dear Children:—We come to-day in the explanation of the Catechism to the sixth article, which says: "He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty." You must supply the meaning of this article in this way: "I believe, or we believe, that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, and there sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

This article again embraces two truths of faith, namely:

1. That Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, and
2. That He sits at the right hand of God.

The Catechism asks: (1) What is meant by "He ascended into heaven?" The answers says: "That Jesus Christ, by His own power, with soul and body, went up into heaven."

History relates the following concerning this: After His resurrection Jesus still remained forty days upon earth. During this time He appeared often to His Disciples, gave them various commissions and promises, and the command that they should not leave Jerusalem before they had received from above the power of the Holy Ghost. On the fortieth day after His resurrection He led them unto the Mount of Olives. Here He placed Himself in their midst, lifted up His hands, blessed them, and whilst blessing them He rose up before their eyes ever higher and higher, until a cloud of light hid Him from their sight.

When we say: "Jesus ascended into heaven by His own power," we mean without assistance or cooperation from others. With the same power and omnipotence with which He rose again, He also ascended into heaven. It means that Jesus ascended into heaven with soul and body. But as body and soul only make one person, one might think that Jesus ascended into heaven according to His human nature only; this is not so. At His ascension the Divine Nature was not separated from the human. Jesus therefore ascended into heaven as God and as man.

Jesus foretold His ascension in various parts of Scripture. He said: "In my Father's house there are many mansions, I go to

prepare a place for you." And again: "I go to my God and to your God."

"It is expedient for you that I go; for if I go not, the Comforter will not come to you."

Did Christ ascend alone into heaven?

No; He took also with Him into heaven the souls of the just whom He had liberated from Limbo.

In ancient times it was the custom that kings and generals, when they returned victorious from war, brought their prisoners and subjugated enemies with them in a triumphal procession. This took place in order to enhance the renown of the conqueror.

At His ascension Jesus celebrated a like triumphal procession, when, as conqueror over death and hell, He entered into heaven with the souls of the just. Those, however, whom Jesus took with Him into heaven were not His enemies, but His friends. Therefore they did not go to a hard and shameful captivity, but they went from captivity into freedom, from Limbo into eternal blessedness.

It is to be remarked that only the just entered into heaven with Jesus. Therefore if we wish one day to enter into heaven, we must so live that we may be found just before God.

Where did Christ ascend into heaven?

On Mount Olivet, before the eyes of His Disciples. This also has its significance. On the same spot where His Disciples saw Him in a bloody sweat of agony, in that same place were they to behold Him in His power and glory. From the same spot where His Passion commenced, from that same place did He desire to enter into His glory.

Jesus ascended into heaven before the eyes of His Disciples so that all of them could give testimony of it.

For what purpose did Christ ascend into heaven?

1. To take possession of His glory.

2. To be our Mediator and Advocate with His Father.

3. To prepare a place for us.

I. The sojourn of Jesus upon earth was only transitory. His mission was accomplished, humanity redeemed, His enemies overcome, the Church founded, and thereby the corner stone of the kingdom of God was laid. Jesus had always said: "My kingdom is not of this world." Jesus by His ascension has gone before us to encourage us so to live that we also may be eternally happy with Him in heaven.

II. Jesus wishes to be our Mediator and Advocate with God. Therefore St. John says: "But if any one has sinned, so have we an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Just One, and He is the expiation for our sins."

As Jesus Christ so exalted human nature that He took it upon Himself and became Incarnate, so did He also desire as Mediator and Advocate to have mercy upon those for whom He assumed human nature.

Similitude. As once in the Old Law the high priest entered into the Sanctuary of the Temple at Jerusalem to pray to God for the chosen Jewish people, so Jesus Christ as high priest of the New Law entered into the Sanctuary of heaven, to be our Mediator and Advocate, but not temporarily, like the high priest of the Old Law, but for ever more.

III. To prepare a place for us also. The words of Jesus, "In my Father's house there are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, you also may be," have reference to this. What a sweet consolation, what infinite love lies in these words of Jesus. He not only desired to accomplish the work of man's redemption, but He desired Himself to prepare a place in heaven for us, so that we might not be separated from Him, but be eternally united with Him. How ungrateful, therefore, would that person be who would despise this abode prepared for him by Jesus? But for us it is an encouragement to become worthy of being accepted into the heavenly mansions; for Jesus says: "Not every one that saith to me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

If we would enter heaven with Jesus we must also fight and struggle with Him. We must detach our hearts from that which is earthly, and reflect that our home is not here, but beyond, in eternal life. In this life we are only pilgrims and strangers, we shall only find peace in our true home, which is heaven.

What means: "Sitteth at the right hand of God"? It means that Christ, as man also, is exalted above all created things, and participates in the power and glory of the Divine Majesty. According to His Divinity Jesus was always united with God. But now also as man, according to His human nature, He enjoys the glory with His Father in heaven due Him as God-man for the great work of the redemption of mankind.

The expression "sitteth" signifies a state of repose. However,

you must not take this expression literally; for as God is an invisible Spirit, He can therefore not sit, and He has neither a right nor a left hand. We speak indeed of God's eyes, ears, and hands, although we know that He has none. But because as men honor others by letting them sit upon the right (the place of honor) we apply this expression in this case to heavenly things, and thereby make it understood that Jesus Christ as man is in continual, peaceful and undisturbed possession and participation in the Divine power and glory, and that the glory of Jesus is in no way distinct from the glory of the Father.

In commemoration of the ascension of Jesus we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension, forty days after Easter, because Jesus after His resurrection remained forty days upon earth. On the Feast of the Ascension the paschal candle, blessed on Holy Saturday, is extinguished after the Gospel, and removed from near the high altar, where it had stood since Easter upon the left or Gospel side. This candle represents our Divine Saviour, who on the fortieth day after His resurrection, left the world and ascended into heaven. The five openings in this candle signify the chief wounds of our Divine Saviour. The grains of incense in each of the five openings signify that Jesus was embalmed.

Application. Frequently lift up your eyes and heart to heaven, and spare no pains to attain this immense reward!

God has so created us that our vision is directed toward heaven, for which we were created. Animals are made to look toward the earth because they are only created for the earth. With our eyes, with our glance, we should however also uplift our heart to God, that is to say, as often as we look up to heaven we should remind ourselves that we are not created for this world, but for heaven, that we should therefore on our part do everything we possibly can to attain this precious recompense. I have already told you that the kingdom of heaven can only be obtained by struggle and strife. The wicked spirit within and without us, especially sensual desires and inclinations, draw our will from God and attract it to evil. Therefore Holy Scripture says: "Narrow is the gate and straight the path." The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only the violent will carry it away. We must undertake and carry on this strife with courage and perseverance, and reflect especially upon the magnitude of heavenly happiness, of which Christ says: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered

into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love Him." For so great a reward we ought to make a great sacrifice.

To convince myself that you have paid proper attention during this instruction, and that you have understood it thoroughly, we will now review the same.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? On the sixth article of the creed.

2. What says the sixth article? "He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."

3. How many truths are contained in this article? Two. 1. That Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, and 2. That He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty.

4. What can you tell me of Christ's ascension into heaven?
(The child will recite what it knows about this.)

5. What do the words "Ascended into heaven" teach us? That Jesus Christ by His own power went up into heaven with soul and body.

6. What means: Jesus Christ ascended into heaven by His own power? It means without help or cooperation of any one.

7. Why could Jesus ascend into heaven by His own power? Because as God He is omnipotent.

8. Did Jesus foretell His ascension? Yes; Jesus foretold His ascension.

9. With what words? Jesus said: "In my Father's house there are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."

10. Give another passage of Scripture? "I ascend to my God and to your God." "It is expedient for you that I go; for if I go not the Paraclete will not come to you."

11. We have already said that Jesus ascended into heaven with body and soul. Did Jesus Christ accordingly ascend into heaven only as man? No; at His Ascension His Divinity was united with His humanity.

12. Why, then, are body and soul only mentioned? Because the Divinity is inseparable from the person of Christ.

13. Did Christ ascend alone into heaven? No; He took also with Him into heaven the souls of the just whom He had liberated from Limbo.

14. To what, therefore, may we compare the ascension of Jesus? To the triumphal procession of a conqueror.

15. What custom existed in ancient times at the return of a conqueror? That of bringing in procession the prisoners and captive enemy.

16. Why was this done? To enhance the conqueror's renown.

17. Were the just who entered into heaven with Jesus also prisoners and subjugated enemies? No; they were the friends of Jesus.

18. Why did they enter into heaven with Jesus? To exalt the renown and glory of Jesus.

19. Did these just souls go to a hard captivity? No; they went as the ransomed into eternal felicity.

20. Did the wicked enter likewise with Jesus into heaven? No; only the just.

21. How then must we live, if we wish to enter into the mansions prepared for us by Jesus? We must live righteously and holily.

22. Where did Christ ascend into heaven? Upon Mount Olivet before the eyes of His Disciples.

23. Why upon Mount Olivet? Where Jesus had begun His Passion, there He also desired to enter into His glory.

24. For what other reason? Because there where His Disciples had beheld Him sweating blood in His agony they were also to behold Him in His Majesty and glory.

25. Why did Jesus ascend into heaven before the eyes of His Disciples? That they might not doubt His ascension and that they might give testimony of the same.

26. How did Jesus once more show His love for His Apostles and Disciples before ascending into heaven? He blessed them.

27. What did Jesus wish by the blessing which He bestowed upon His Apostles and Disciples? He wished His Disciples to be truly happy as long as they remained upon earth.

28. When are you also blessed? We are blessed in the church.

29. By whom? By the priest.

30. When does the priest bless in the church? At the conclusion of Mass.

31. Which, however, is the most solemn blessing? The Benediction or blessing with the Blessed Sacrament.

32. Why is this the most solemn of all blessings? Because in the Blessed Sacrament Jesus Himself as God and man is there present.
(Remember this, children, and strive frequently to receive this blessing, and also to become worthy of it.)

33. We heard that the souls of the just whom Jesus had liberated from Limbo accompanied Him into heaven. Did they also enter heaven with body and soul? No; only the souls of the just entered heaven.

34. And their bodies? These must rest in the earth until the day of general resurrection.

35. Why did Christ ascend into heaven? To take possession of His glory.

36. But if Jesus Christ is God He must have been in possession of His Divine glory from all eternity? He took possession of His glory according to His human nature.

37. From what time? From the time of His ascension.

38. What was the second reason why Jesus ascended into heaven? That He might be our Mediator and Advocate with His Father.

39. What is a Mediator? A Mediator is one who reconciles two enemies.

40. Who then were the enemies between whom Jesus was Mediator? These enemies were mankind and God Himself.

41. What had caused enmity between God and mankind? Sin.

42. Who abolished this enmity? Jesus Christ abolished it.

43. In what way? Through His mediation with God.

44. How did Jesus become even on this earth a Mediator between God and man? By His death of atonement.

45. Where does Jesus still continue this mediation? Jesus continues this mediation in heaven.

46. Why is this necessary? Because mankind is always offending God.

47. In what manner does Jesus exercise His office of Mediator in heaven? By applying to us His merits.

48. Which merits? The merits of His Passion and death.

49. How does He apply them to us? Through the Holy Sacraments.

50. Where most especially? In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

51. What therefore is Christ through the Sacraments? He is our Mediator.

52. But as Jesus Christ the Son of God is equal to God the Father, the question is: Is Jesus our Mediator in heaven according to His Divine or His human nature? Jesus is our Mediator in heaven according to His human nature.

53. Jesus is also our Advocate. Now, what is an advocate? An advocate is one who pleads for another with a superior.

54. Now we know that Jesus is God and as such is omnipotent; He can therefore help Himself. Why accordingly do we call Him our Advocate? Because He is our Advocate with God according to His human nature and not according to His Divine.

55. What does St. John say of the mediation and advocacy of Jesus? St. John says: "But if any one has sinned, so have we an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just one, and he is the expiation for our sins."

56. What else can we call Jesus because He is our Advocate with God? We can also call Him the High Priest of the New Law.

57. What did the high priest of the Old Law do? He prayed in the Sanctuary of the Temple for the people of Israel.

58. Why can we also call Jesus the High Priest of the New Law? Because Jesus in heaven does the same for us as the high priest did in the Old Law in the Temple for the people of Israel.

59. What was the third reason why Jesus ascended into heaven? To prepare a place for us there.

60. Are there then in heaven dwellings such as we have on earth, beautiful palaces, etc.? No; it is only said figuratively.

61. What means "Jesus will also prepare a dwelling for us?" It signifies: Jesus will provide that we too may go to heaven where He is.

62. Which words of Jesus have reference to this? Jesus said: "In my Father's house there are many mansions; I go there to prepare one for you."

63. What is apparent from these words, from this promise of Jesus? The great love which Jesus has for man.

64. What, however, must we do on our part that this promise may be fulfilled? We must so live that we may be worthy to go to heaven.

65. By what text of Scripture can you prove to me that all men will not enter into heaven but only the just? By the words of Jesus: "Not every one who saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven."

66. Now as life upon this earth is only brief and transitory, as what should we consider ourselves? As pilgrims and strangers.

67. What is the goal of our journey, of our pilgrimage upon earth? It is heaven.

68. When do we miss this path, this goal? When we sin.

69. To where would the wrong path lead us? To eternal damnation.

70. The second part of the sixth article says: "Sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty." Has God, who is a Spirit, a right and a left side? No; that is only said figuratively, and not to be understood literally.

71. What means this expression "sitteth?" The peaceful and unchanging possession of the Divine glory.

72. Why do we say "at the right hand of God;" what is the right side? The right side is the place of honor.

73. What means therefore Jesus sits at the right hand of God? It means the glory of Jesus is in nowise different from the glory of God the Father.

74. Which festival of the church reminds us of the ascension of Christ? The Feast of the Ascension.

75. Upon what day is this feast celebrated? Upon the fortieth day after Easter.

76. What ceremony during Holy Mass reminds us of the ascension of Jesus? After the Gospel the paschal candle is extinguished and taken away.

77. What is the paschal candle? It is a large wax candle, that is blessed on Holy Saturday and stands near the High Altar until the feast of Christ's ascension.

78. In what way does this paschal candle differ from the others destined for use in the church? In this candle there are five indentations.

79. Of whom is this paschal candle a symbol? It is a symbol of our Divine Saviour.

80. What do the five openings in the paschal candle signify? They signify the five wounds.

81. What is there in these openings? Grains of incense.

82. What do these signify? They signify that the body of Jesus was embalmed.

83. What signifies the extinction and carrying away of this candle from the altar? It signifies that Jesus ascended into heaven and disappeared from His Disciples' sight.

84. What does the application of the sixth article say? It says: Lift up your eyes and heart frequently to heaven, and spare no pains to attain this immense reward.

85. What resolution should we make as often as we look up to heaven? We should form the resolution to spare no pains to acquire heaven.

86. What then must we do to obtain heaven? We must take great trouble and exertion.

87. What says Holy Scripture concerning this? It says: "The gate is narrow and the path is straight. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only those who use violence will carry it away."

88. What are the obstacles which we must overcome with violence to obtain heaven? The bad desires within us and the wicked temptations without us.

89. Is the happiness of heaven really so great a reward for the just? Yes; it is really a very great reward.

90. What says Holy Scripture concerning the joys of heaven? Holy Scripture says: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for them that love Him."

91. But ought we to live holily only that we may get to heaven? No; we should live holily for love of God.

92. However, as many persons can not attain to this degree of moral perfection, what has God promised to mankind to incite them all the more to do good? God has promised them heaven, eternal happiness.

And as we all desire to be united with God in heaven, we will to-day make the firm resolution to renounce the pleasures and temptations of the world, and with God's grace to strive after perfection only, that we may one day obtain everlasting happiness, and participate in the glory of our Divine Saviour.

XXIX.

The Seventh Article: "From thence He Shall Come to Judge the Living and the Dead."

Dear Children:—Holy Scripture tells us the following parable: "A rich man was about to go into a far country, there to take possession of a kingdom. He called his servants to him before setting out on his journey and gave to them of his wealth; to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to every one according to his ability. Trade therewith, he said, until I return, and immediately he set forth on his journey. And he that had received the five talents went his way, and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner he that had received the two gained other two. But he that had received one, going his way, digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. Meantime the lord had taken possession of the kingdom and after a long time he returned. He at once gave orders for the servants to whom he had confided the money to be called, that he might see how much each one had gained by diligence and fidelity. And he that had received the five talents, coming, brought other five talents, saying: "Lord, thou deliveredst to me five talents: behold, I have gained other five over and above." His lord said to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of the lord." And he also that had received the two talents came and said: "Lord, thou deliveredst two talents to me: behold, I have gained other two." His lord said to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." But he that had received the one talent, came and said: "Lord, I know that thou art a hard man, thou reapest where thou hast not sown, and gatherest where thou hast not strewed. And being afraid, I went and hid my talent in the earth: behold, here thou hast that which is thine."

And his lord, answering, said to him: "Thou evil and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sow not, and gather where I have not strewed. Thou oughtest, therefore, to have committed my money to the bankers: and at my coming I should have

received my own with usury. Take ye away, therefore, the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents. For to every one that hath shall be given; and he shall abound; but for him that hath not, that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away. And the unprofitable servant cast ye out into exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In this picture Holy Scripture represents to us the lot of the good and the wicked at the last day. The lord who travels into a far country to take possession of a kingdom is our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ; His ascension is the departure; the kingdom of which He took possession is heaven. The servants to whom He confided His money is mankind; the faithful servants are the good, the bad and slothful servant the wicked. The fortune that the lord confided to his servants are the gifts and graces which God grants to mankind and which mankind employs according to the will of God. The day of return is the last day, on which the Son of God will come again to judge the living and the dead. The seventh article reminds us of this by the words: "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead," to the explanation of which we have come to-day.

The Catechism asks: What does the seventh article of the creed teach us?

It teaches us that Jesus Christ at the end of the world shall come again with great power and glory to judge all men, both the good and the wicked.

This article teaches us:

1. Who will come again one day, namely, our Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ.

2. When He will come again—at the last day.

3. How He will come again—with great power and glory.

4. For what purpose—to judge all men, the good and the wicked.

Jesus Christ at His first appearance in the world showed Himself to mankind in His abasement. He was born in poverty. Wicked men, His enemies, heaped abuse and ignominy upon Him, and He was condemned and executed like a criminal. It will be otherwise at the second appearance of Jesus when as God He will come again in His power and glory as Judge of the whole world. By the living we understand the good who will be found in a state of righteousness; by the dead the wicked, who will be found in a state of sin, of disgrace and of the Divine displeasure.

However, we can also understand by the living those persons who will be still living at the last day, whilst by the dead we may understand those who died before the last day.

What is this judgment called at the end of the world? The general judgment or the judgment of the world, because then all the people of the whole world will be judged at the same time.

General is that which extends over everything. A judgment is a decision as to right and wrong, bringing reward or punishment.

The general judgment of which we are talking is God's decision over all men, whether they have deserved eternal reward or eternal punishment, or a general separation of the just from the wicked, as it is represented to us figuratively in the parable of the harvest, where the husbandman permits the good wheat to grow up side by side with the weeds, until the day of the harvest; on that day, however, he gathers the wheat into his barns and the weeds he causes to be burnt in eternal fire. The secret revelation speaks of the last judgment: "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books were opened; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Apoc. xx. 12). Our divine Saviour Himself describes the general judgment of the world in the following manner: "And when the Son of man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before him; and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand: but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . Then shall he say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels."

Reason itself tells us that there must be a general judgment of the world. So many wicked people live in opulence, honor and esteem, whilst many devout persons languish in poverty, misery, and contempt. Now, where would justice be if a day did not come when all this would be regulated? How much good and evil remain hidden in this world? Is it then not necessary that there should be a general judgment where everything hidden should come to light?

The wisdom of God has not revealed to man when this great and important day, and, for the wicked especially, most awful day, shall come, no more than man knows the hour of his death.

This uncertainty contains the wholesome teaching for all men, so to live, that one is ready at any moment to appear before the tribunal of his Saviour.

This preparation for the coming of the universal judge is represented to us figuratively in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The wise virgins had brought oil and lamps with them; and they could guide the bridegroom into the marriage, and enter there themselves. The foolish virgins had lamps, but no oil. The arrival of the bridegroom surprised them. While they went to buy oil, the bridegroom was admitted to the marriage, and the door was shut. When they asked permission to enter they heard these words: "I know you not," and sad and ashamed they went away. Still Holy Scripture itself says that the coming of the Saviour at the last day will be preceded by certain signs, namely:

1. There will arise false prophets and heretics, and a great falling away from the faith will take place.

2. There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. The sun will become darkened, the moon will give no more light, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty."

How shall we be judged?

We shall be judged according to all our thoughts, words, works, and omissions. God has not only given us His commandments, and revealed to us His will, but He gives us His graces also that we may live according to His will. Besides, we made a solemn promise in Holy Baptism to live as good Christians. All this places duties and obligations upon us concerning which we shall have to render the strictest account to God. We must therefore consecrate our whole being and all the powers of our soul to God, and be ever ready for His service.

God has granted us particularly the gifts of understanding, reason and free will. We must therefore give an account of what we have thought.

God has, moreover, granted us the gift of speech; we must ac-

cordingly give an account of how we have employed this gift. Therefore Holy Scripture says that man must render an account "of every idle word that cometh out of his mouth."

In the same manner we must render an account of all our actions, even indeed of the good that we have omitted to do. We must even render an account of the intention with which we performed our good deeds: for an action which is in itself perfectly good, can in God's sight lose much of its value if we perform it from an ignoble motive, for instance, from self interest, etc.

The question now is how will God judge? The answer is:

1. Justly and strictly. Even the least good will be rewarded, the least evil will be punished. Holy Scripture says: "A cup of water given to the poor for my sake, shall not go unrewarded."

2. Without respect of persons. With God there is no distinction of rank. At the judgment the emperor is like the beggar, the high resemble the lowly, the rich the poor, etc.

3. Inexorably. The damned will wail and lament; but God will not be moved. He who is once sentenced, remains sentenced.

4. For all eternity.

This is as consoling for the good as it is terrible for the wicked. The punishment of hell is in itself awful, but it becomes still more so from the fact that it will endure eternally. As little as one can tell where a rolling ball will stop, so little can we tell of eternity. As a drop of water compared to a great ocean, so are millions of years compared to eternity. What will God do so that all the world may acknowledge His justice?

He will reveal the good and the evil, even the most secret thoughts of all men, as well as the graces which He has given to each one. All the good which men have done quietly and hiddenly for the glory of God, and all the evil that has not come to light will be revealed before all mankind at the last day; in the same way the measure of grace which God has given to each one, so that the whole world may know and acknowledge His justice: "God has judged justly"! As in the world almost everywhere the worldly judgment is held publicly, so that every one who is present must say: "The judges have judged justly!" so also will God the Supreme Judge one day publicly judge all the good and the evil of each one before the whole world, and bring it to light.

What will be the sentence, and the end of the last judgment?

Christ will say to the good: "Come, ye blessed of my Father,

possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But to the wicked He will say: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels."

While the good therefore hear this inviting word "come," the damned will hear those terrible words "Depart from me," and this is perfectly right and just. They who were always united to God in this world, will be united with God in the next world, and they who in this world would have nothing to do with God, at the last day God will not look upon them as His.

The punishment of hell is twofold:

1. A punishment of loss, inasmuch as the damned remain shut out from the Beatific Vision, and

2. A punishment of feeling because the damned will have to suffer horribly like the wicked angels who on account of their pride were cast into hell by God. There are many persons who seek to console themselves by believing that God will not permit an eternal punishment, and that there will probably be a deliverance from hell; but that is a false consolation. From the pains of hell any escape is impossible: 1. Because God in virtue of His omniscience and wisdom can not err in His judgments; 2. Because God is incorruptible and inexorable.

What will take place after sentence has been pronounced by the Judge?

The wicked will go to hell, but the good to heaven. These words imply that the sentence of the Divine Judge will be immediately executed after it has been pronounced; for with God to will and to execute is one. With jubilation and joy the good and the elect will enter into heaven with the Holy Angels, and take possession of the mansions which have been prepared for them since the beginning of the world. The wicked, however, will enter upon a most awful doom, which they will have to acknowledge they prepared for themselves. How foolish therefore it is to run after the vain pleasures of this world which so often plunge men into sin, which make ready for them eternal ruin, and eternal perdition. Thence follows for us the good lesson to practice virtue perseveringly and to shun vice, no matter what it may cost us.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken of to-day? Of the seventh article of the creed.

2. What says the seventh article? "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

3. Who will come again from thence? Our Divine Saviour, Jesus Christ.

4. What means from thence? It means from heaven.

5. Why do we say Jesus will come again? Because Jesus has already been here once.

6. When will Jesus come again? At the last day.

7. For what purpose will Jesus come again? To judge the living and the dead.

8. What does the seventh article of the creed teach us? It teaches us that Jesus Christ at the end of the world shall come again with great power and glory to judge all men, both the good and the wicked.

9. Will the second appearance of the Saviour resemble that of His first? No; it will not.

10. How did Jesus show Himself to men at His first appearance? He showed Himself to them in poverty and abasement.

11. Where was He born, and what was His first clothing? In a stable at Bethlehem. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes.

12. What did Jesus Himself say of His poverty? He said: "The birds have their nests, and the foxes have their holes, but the Son of man has not even a stone whereon to lay His head.

13. How will Jesus appear when He comes again? In His Divine power and glory.

14. Who is understood by the living and the dead? By the living are understood the good, and by the dead the wicked.

15. How may these words of Jesus be otherwise understood? By the living we may understand those who will be still living at the last day, and by the dead those already dead at the last day.

16. What is this judgment called at the end of the world? The general judgment, or judgment of the world.

17. Why is it called general or universal? Because then all the people of the whole world will be judged at the same time.

18. Which judgment is contrary to the general? The particular judgment.

19. When does the particular judgment occur for each individual? At the end of their lives, directly after death.

20. What is understood by judgment? By judgment is understood the decision of a judge concerning right or wrong, reward or punishment.

21. What is understood by general judgment? By general judgment is understood the separation of the good from the wicked, for eternal reward or eternal punishment.

22. In what figures or parables has Jesus represented the general judgment? 1. In the parable of the talents. 2. In the parable of the harvest. 3 In the parable of the unjust steward. (The pupil will recite the parable of the talents.)

23. Who is the Lord who journeyed into a far country there to take possession of a kingdom? It is our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

24. Which is the kingdom He took possession of? The kingdom of heaven.

25. Who are the servants to whom the Lord intrusted His fortune? They are mankind.

26. How did the Lord distribute His talents? To one He gave five, to the other two, and again to another one; to each according to his ability.

27. What is understood by these talents? The graces which God grants to men.

28. What command did the Lord give to His servants? He said: "Trade therewith, until I return."

29. What ought each one to do with the graces granted to him by God? He should employ them for good.

30. What did the Lord do when He returned from His journey? He caused His servants to appear before Him.

31. What did they have to do before their Lord? They had to render an account of the management of the fortune which the Lord had intrusted to them.

32. What did the first two servants do with the fortune intrusted to them? They added still more to it.

33. What did they receive from their Lord for this? They received the reward merited.

34. What did the third servant do with the fortune intrusted to him? He buried it in the ground.

35. Was this servant also rewarded by His Lord? No; he was punished.

36. In what did his punishment consist? The Lord said: "Cast him into the exterior darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Recite the parable of the harvest, or of the weeds and wheat. (The pupil will recite the same.)

37. What had the Lord sown? He had sown only good wheat.

38. Who is this Lord? By this Lord is meant God.

39. But what was strewn amongst the good wheat? Weeds were strewn amongst it.

40. Who had done this? A hostile person.

41. Who is meant thereby? The evil spirit.

42. Now did the Lord cause the weeds to be plucked out at once? No; He said: "Let both grow until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle and bind it into bundles to burn; but gather the wheat into my barn."

43. What does the fact signify, that the Lord does not cause the weeds to be pulled up at once? This signifies that God gives time and opportunity to the wicked to be converted and to amend.

44. But what happened at the harvest time? The weeds were burnt, but the wheat was gathered into barns.

45. Who is understood by the weeds? The wicked.

46. What must they suffer? They must suffer eternal chastisement.

47. Who is understood by the good wheat? The good.

48. With what will they be rewarded? With eternal bliss.

49. What is understood by the harvest time? The last day.

50. Why? Because on the last day every one will receive what he has deserved.

51. Who are understood by the reapers? By the reapers are understood the angels.

52. When will the last day come? We do not know.

53. Why has not God revealed it to men? That they might so live that they could appear at any moment without fear before the judgment seat of God.

54. How then should we live, so that we need not be afraid of God's judgment? We should do good and avoid evil, as the will of God prescribes.

55. In which parable did Jesus desire to teach us to be ready for the judgment at any moment? In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. Tell me what you know of this parable.
(The pupil recites it briefly.)

56. What did the wise virgins do? They took oil with their lamps.

57. What on the contrary did the foolish virgins do? They took their lamps but no oil.

58. And when the bridegroom came what were they unable to do? They could not meet him with burning lamps.

59. How did they seek to procure oil? They ran to buy some of the merchants.

60. What happened during this time? The bridegroom arrived for the marriage, and the door was shut.

61. When later the foolish virgins begged for admission, what did the bridegroom say? He said: 'I know you not."

62. What is here understood by the oil? The good works that a man performs.

63. How long does God grant man time to practice good works? As long as he lives.

64. If one does not use the time of life to do good? He can not enter heaven.

65. What do we learn therefrom? We learn so to live that we are prepared at any moment for the advent of the Divine Judge.

66. Will the coming of the Divine Saviour be preceded by anything? Holy Scripture says it will be preceded by certain signs.

67. What signs are mentioned in Holy Scripture? 1. There will arise false prophets and teachers, and a great falling away from the faith will take place. 2. There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars.

68. How shall we be judged? We shall be judged according to all our thoughts, words, works, and omissions.

69. Why has Jesus the right to judge us? 1. Because He redeemed us, and, as it were, bought us with His blood. 2. Because He has revealed to us the will of God and given us grace to fulfil the same. 3. Because in our Baptismal vows we made the sacred promise to live always as good Christians.

70. Now tell me how will God judge us? God will judge us justly and strictly.

71. What does that mean? That He will reward the least good and punish the least evil.

72. How else will God judge? Without respect of person.

73. Explain this more fully? With God there is no distinction of rank; in the eyes of God the poor are equal to the rich, the lowly to the proud, the beggar to the emperor.

74. How else will God judge? Inexorably; that is, He will not be moved by the lamentations of the damned.

75. Is there no escape from the pains of hell possible? No; none whatever.

76. What lesson should we draw from this? We should so live that we may not be condemned to eternal punishment.

77. What will God do so that the whole world may acknowledge His justice? God will reveal the good and the evil, even the most secret thoughts of each one as well as the graces which He has conferred upon each one.

78. How can God reveal all this? Because He is omniscient.

79. For whom will the last day be most awful? For the wicked.

80. What is the punishment of the damned? It is twofold: 1. It is a punishment of loss and 2. A punishment of feeling.

81. In what way do the damned undergo the punishment of loss? Because they are excluded forever from the Beatific Vision.

82. In what way is their punishment one of the senses? The damned have to suffer horribly in hell.

83. What will take place after the Divine Judge has pronounced sentence? The wicked will go to hell, but the good to heaven.

84. What do these words signify? They signify that the sentence of the Divine Judge will be executed immediately.

85. If then we desire to gain heaven, how must we begin? By living according to the will of God.

86. And if we desire to be preserved from hell, what must we do? We must flee even the smallest sin.

87. Is this easy or difficult? It is difficult.

88. Why? Because man is tempted to evil.

89. By whom is man tempted to evil? By the wicked without him, and bad desires within him.

90. How can man come out of this strife victoriously? With God's grace.

91. What must you do that God may grant you His grace? I must pray to Him for it.

92. If God grants you this grace to do good, is it then still difficult? No; it is easy for me.

I will now conclude to-day's instruction, and express the wish that you may all have a joyful resurrection at the last day, and that at that great day of judgment, God may say to you all: "Come ye blessed of my Father, and possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

XXX.

Continuation of the Seventh Article.

Dear Children:—In the last instruction we had arrived in the explanation of the Catechism at the seventh article to the question, "What is hell"? Hell, according to the definition of Jesus Christ, is an unquenchable fire, where there is eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth. The pasages of Scripture referring to this are the following: "If thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee.

It is better for thee to enter into eternal life maimed, than having two hands, to be cast into everlasting fire, where the worm never dies and the fire is never quenched. Cast the unprofitable servant into exterior darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Weeping and gnashing of teeth is an expression of the greatest suffering. When therefore Holy Scripture says that hell is a place of eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth, it implies thereby that hell is the signification of the greatest suffering, which is made still more terrible because it is endless and will endure for all eternity.

What is heaven?

Heaven is a place of eternal perfect happiness. On earth when a man is in good health, if he is rich and blessed with prosperity, if he is esteemed and honored by others, he believes himself happy. But the happiness of mortals is 1. Only a transitory one, and 2. An imperfect one. It is only transitory, for death puts an end to it. It is imperfect, too, for with all apparent happiness man feels that there is still something wanting to true happiness, for no one upon earth is so happy that nothing is wanting to him. Heaven, however, is the place of eternal happiness which will have no end, and of perfect happiness which leaves nothing to be desired. Even Holy Scripture makes no attempt to depict the happiness of heaven.

It only says: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those that love him." Is there not besides the general another judgment? Yes; there is also a particular judgment in which every man shall be judged immediately after his death.

Holy Scripture adduces proof of this where it says: "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after that the judgment."

God is just, and must in virtue of His justice repay each one according to the good or evil they have committed in their lives.

God's decision for every individual person is called the particular judgment. Now perhaps some may think: "If each one will be judged immediately after his death, why should there be another general judgment?"

The Catechism gives the following answer to this question:

1. That God's wisdom and justice may be acknowledged by all men;

2. That Jesus Christ may be glorified before the whole world; and
3. That the good may receive the honor due to them, and the wicked the dishonor they have deserved.

First, through the general judgment God's wisdom and justice may be acknowledged by all men. A great deal that is hidden from us here upon earth, much that we are not capable of knowing upon this earth, we shall comprehend then in eternity at the general judgment. There we shall know for the first time why God has so often let sufferings, tribulations, ignominy, contempt and poverty be the portion of the good and the just, whilst He distributed to the ungodly earthly joys, honors, esteem and wealth. There it will be revealed how God leads through sufferings to joy, and how He Himself knows how to turn evil into good through His wisdom. There it will be shown to the whole world that no good, not even the very least good work will pass unrewarded, and no evil, not even the unnecessary word, remain unpunished. There at last all mistakes (false judgments) of human justice will be laid bare, and amends be made, the innocent who were persecuted will be honored, the most secret vices will be punished.

Secondly, by the general judgment Jesus will be glorified before the whole world. The glorification of Jesus Christ in this world was and is only an imperfect one. But at the general judgment of the world Jesus Christ will be fully glorified before all creatures; then for the first time will He receive the befitting and complete honor due Him from all the world. The enemies of Christianity will tremble, the scoffers and deriders of His teaching will be silenced, men who in their pride set up their reason against His word will be brought to shame, malice, schism and heresy will be laid bare, all those hardened hearts who rejected the divine institution of salvation will be exposed. And every one will be obliged to give honor to the Almighty Judge, before whom the earth is silent.

Thirdly, by the general judgment the good will receive the honor they have deserved, and the wicked the dishonor they deserve. The virtues and rectitude of men is not only frequently ignored (unjustly condemned) but indeed often despised. They are called devotees, Pharisees, hypocrites, fools and so forth, because they take pleasure in intercourse with God, in prayer, in receiving the Holy Sacraments, in despising the pleasures of the world, in listening to the word of God, in fasting, almsgiving and practising other

good works. At the last day, at the general judgment, it will be shown how erroneous were the judgments of this world. The virtue and integrity of the good will find their full acknowledgment, but vice and wickedness their well merited ignominy and public disgrace. Holy Scripture points this out also when it says: "Then shall the ungodly groan for anguish of spirit, saying: These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honor. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints."

Whither does the soul go after the particular judgment?

Either to heaven, or to hell, or to purgatory. Those who leave this world in the state of God's grace, free from all sin, go to heaven and there receive the reward of eternal bliss. Those who depart this life in grievous sin, mortal sin, go to hell, and there receive the punishment of eternal damnation.

Those, however, who although in a state of grace and not yet free from sin, go to the place of purification, to purgatory. "To purge" means a powerful cleansing from dirt and dross. As, for instance, gold is purified by fire, so that all dirt and dross is eliminated from it, thus in the place of purification or purgatory the souls of the just are cleansed from the venial sins still adhering to them.

That there really is between heaven and hell a middle state—a place of cleansing—we have the following proofs:

1. Holy Scripture says: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."

2. Tradition.

3. The doctrine of the Catholic Church, and

4. Reason.

1. Holy Scripture says: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead. that they may be loosed from sins."

Judas Maccabeus sent 12,000 drachms of silver to the Temple at Jerusalem as a sacrifice to be offered for those fallen in battle, believing that the dead not yet quite free from sin would through prayer and sacrifice be helped so that they might be completely freed from their sins.

2 and 3. Tradition and the Catholic Church teach that there is a purgatory, a place of purification. The Council of Trent appeals in its explanation of purgatory to the decision of the Fathers and says

expressly that there is a purgatory, and that the souls there retained receive through the help of the faithful, and especially through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, alleviation. This church council imposes the ban upon those who say that the debt of temporal punishment must not be paid either in this world or afterward in purgatory. It is therefore an article of faith of the Catholic Church (a) that there is a purgatory, and (b) that therein the suffering souls are helped by prayers and sacrifice.

This article of faith of the Catholic Church is also confirmed by her usages.

From the earliest times the souls of the dead were prayed for and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered for them. Very ancient is the celebration of All Souls' day.

That beautiful prayer also has reference to this: "O Lord, grant to the souls of the faithful departed eternal rest, and may perpetual light shine upon them."

4. Our reason illumined by the rays of divine revelation perceives that by virtue of the divine justice even the smallest guilt must be expiated, that those souls therefore who departed this life not quite pure and unspotted must remain in an intermediate place, there to be excluded from the Beatific Vision until they are deemed worthy by the divine mercy to enter heaven and enjoy the vision of God. Their state also is accordingly an intermediate state, because they partake at the same time of happiness and suffering. The thought that they are not shut out from God forever, but have the hope of being united with Him, gives them happiness. On the other hand, they endure suffering by rendering satisfaction to the divine justice for their lesser faults. Even Protestants admit that the doctrine of a place of purification is not contrary to reason, and the Jews also believe in a place of purification. The doctrine of a purgatory is at once consoling and encouraging. It is consoling for it is comforting to our consciousness, that those who are only burdened with venial sins will not be punished with the pains of hell, but have the hope after a complete purification to be admitted to the presence of God. But it is also encouraging because it urges us not to defile our hearts even with venial sin.

Who are those that go to purgatory?

Such souls as have departed this life, not in mortal, but in venial sin; also those who have still to suffer the punishment deserved for their past sins.

It is well, therefore, to distinguish that only those can expiate their sins who depart this life in venial sin. Whoever departs this life in mortal sin will be condemned to eternal perdition. The words of Holy Scripture have reference to this: "They will not be released from the prison until the last farthing has been paid" (that means until they have expiated the last remnant of their guilt). Now, how can we help the souls in purgatory? 1. By prayer. Holy Scripture says: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." St. Augustine says: "It is an old custom to pray for the dead and offer sacrifice for them." Even the Jews pray for their dead. 2. By sacrifice. In the Old Law Judas Maccabeus sent 10,000 drachms of silver to Jerusalem that sacrifice might be offered for the dead. Now, if the sacrifice of the Old Testament obtained the mercy of God, how much more will the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacrifice of the New Law avail the souls in their place of purification? St. Ambrose says: "Not by tears, but by sacrifice commend the souls of the departed to the Lord." St. Matilda had the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered daily for the repose of her husband's soul, the German King Henry. 3. By the gaining of Indulgences, which can be offered up for them. It is a doctrine of faith in the Catholic Church that one can apply the graces and fruits of an indulgence to the poor souls in purgatory. In commemoration of the poor souls in purgatory the Catholic Church celebrates on the second of November every year the Feast of All Souls, which is therefore on the day after the Feast of All Saints. The Catholic Church thereby desires to teach us that the poor souls in purgatory still belong to our community, and she incites us thereby to pray zealously for the souls of the dead. These prayers for the departed are not only profitable for the holy souls themselves, but also for us, because thereby we are continually reminded not only to avoid grievous sin, but also the very least sins. If we are particularly obliged to pray for all the departed we are still more obliged to do so for those who in life were near to us, and to whom we owe an especial love and gratitude; for instance, for our parents, brothers and sisters, relations, teachers, benefactors, etc.

Will there still be a purgatory after the general judgment?

No; after the general judgment there will be only heaven and hell.

The wisdom and mercy of God will know how to arrange that

all the just will be perfectly purified therein. St. Augustine says: "It is maintained that the punishment of purgatory will only exist until that last and terrible judgment."

Application. Never imagine that nobody sees the evil you are doing; for nothing escapes the eye of God. "And all things that are done God will bring into judgment, whether they be good or evil."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of hell, of heaven, and of purgatory.

2. What is hell? Hell is, according to the words of Jesus Christ, an unquenchable fire, where there is eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth.

3. What is here understood by weeping and gnashing of teeth? An expression of the greatest suffering.

4. Why is hell called an unquenchable fire? Because it will endure eternally.

5. Now if hell is a place of the greatest torments, which endure forever, what should we learn therefrom? So to live that we shall not go to hell.

6. What is the cause of so many going to hell? Their wicked desires and passions, their sensual inclinations.

7. Now if wicked desires are the cause of the pains of hell, what ought we to do? We should overcome our sensual desires and inclinations.

8. Is there even a hell in this world? Yes; it is a bad conscience.

9. Why is a bad conscience a hell? Because it gives the wicked no peace day or night.

10. What is heaven? Heaven is a place of everlasting perfect bliss.

11. How many kinds of happiness are there? There are two, an earthly and an eternal happiness.

12. When does one feel happy in the world? When one is rich, in good health, when others esteem and honor us, when nothing is wanting to us.

13. But how is it with all worldly happiness? All worldly happiness is imperfect.

14. Why so? 1. Because there is another more exalted happiness, and 2. Because earthly happiness only lasts for a time.

15. What constitutes the happiness of souls in heaven? The Beatific Vision, and the union with God.

16. What else? The cessation of all suffering and tribulations.

17. In what way are the joys of heaven still more increased? By their enduring for all eternity.

18. Now if heaven is that place where supreme happiness dwells, what should we learn therefrom? We should exert ourselves to attain heaven, no matter how difficult it may be for us.

19. How is it made easy for us to keep the commandments of God and gain heaven? By God's grace.

20. What does Jesus Himself say for this reason? Jesus said: "My yoke is sweet and my burden light.

21. Through what do we receive God's grace? Through the Holy Sacraments.

22. What then should we do so that with the help of divine grace we may gain heaven? We should frequently receive the sacraments.

23. Who will decide whether we deserve heaven? God will decide.

24. When will God so decide? Immediately after our death.

25. What is this decision called? The particular judgment.

26. How can you prove this to me? By Holy Scripture, which says: "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after that the judgment."

27. But if every one is already rewarded or punished at the particular judgment, why is it necessary to have another general judgment? 1. That God's wisdom and justice may be acknowledged by all men: 2. That Jesus Christ may be glorified before the whole world, and 3. That the good may receive the honor due to them, and the wicked the dishonor they have deserved.

28. How will all men acknowledge God's wisdom? They will comprehend why God so often permitted the good and just to suffer and be afflicted, to undergo ignominy and contempt, whilst He granted to the wicked earthly pleasures, honor, wealth and esteem.

29. How will men acknowledge God's justice? They will behold how God permits no good to be unrewarded and no evil to remain unpunished.

30. Mention a very insignificant good work? To give a poor man a drink of water.

31. Mention an insignificant evil? The wasting of bread.

32. What else will be laid bare at the last day? The mistakes of human justice.

33. How is it possible that human judgment can pronounce false sentences? Men may be mistaken in their judgments.

34. What is the second reason why at the last day a general judgment will take place? That Jesus Christ may be glorified before the whole world.

35. Was not Jesus Christ already glorified in this world? Yes; Jesus Christ was glorified at His Transfiguration upon Mount Thabor, and at His Ascension.

36. But what kind of glorification was that? It was only a partial and imperfect glorification.

37. When will Jesus Christ be glorified before the whole world? At the last day, at the general judgment.

38. Which persons especially will not acknowledge Jesus? The proud, schismatics and heretics.

39. What will these people exclaim at the general judgment? "These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honor. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints."

40. What will the wicked experience at the general judgment because they did not lead good lives? They will feel a profound remorse.

41. Will this remorse help them? No; it will be useless.

42. When should we prepare ourselves for a happy eternity? Whilst we have yet time.

43. What is the third reason why God will hold a general judgment? That the good may receive the honor due to them, and the wicked the dishonor they have deserved.

44. How are the righteous often treated in this life because they are good? They are derided, ridiculed and despised.

45. What are they called derisively? Devotees, Pharisees, hypocrites, etc.

46. Why are the good thus called? Because they pray and frequent the sacraments, fast and give alms, and because they despise worldly pleasures and enjoyments.

47. When will the mistaken judgments of this world be proved false? At the general judgment on the last day.

48. Whither does the soul go after the particular judgment? Either to heaven, or to hell, or to purgatory.

49. Which souls go to heaven? The souls of the just which are entirely free from sin when they depart this life.

50. Which souls go to hell? The souls of the wicked who depart this life in mortal sin.

51. Where do those just souls go who depart this life not quite free from sin? They go to purgatory.

52. What does the word "purge" mean? It signifies a powerful and painful cleansing.

53. What is powerfully cleansed? The soul.

54. From what is it cleansed? From venial sins.

55. Why not from mortal sins? Because whoever dies in mortal sin does not go to purgatory, but to hell.

56. What proof can you give me from the New Testament that there really is a purgatory? "They shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (I Cor. iii. 12-15).

57. What fire is meant thereby? The fire of purgatory.

58. What does the Catholic Church teach concerning purgatory? She teaches 1. That there really is a purgatory, and 2. That we can help the souls in purgatory by prayer and sacrifice.

59. At which of the Church's Councils was this declared? At the Council of Trent.

60. In what way does the Church confirm her belief in the existence of a purgatory? She confirms it by her practices.

61. What has the Catholic Church done from the earliest times for the souls of the dead? She offered up prayers for them, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

62. Which prayer is general in the Catholic Church for the souls of the departed? The prayer: "Eternal rest give unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them."

63. Upon what day does the Church particularly remember the souls in purgatory? Upon All Souls' day, November 2.

64. What does the Catholic Church prove thereby? She proves thereby her belief that there is a purgatory, and that we can help the poor souls by prayer and sacrifice.

65. In what way are the souls in purgatory purified? Through suffering.

66. What difference is there between the pains of purgatory and those of hell? 1. The former are not so great and so severe, and 2. They will cease one day.

67. What thought consoles the poor souls in purgatory? That they will not be excluded forever from the vision of God.

68. How may we assist the holy souls in purgatory? 1. By prayer. 2. By sacrifice. 3. By the gaining of indulgences, and 4. By fasting, almsgiving, and other good works.

69. Now tell me if you pray, fast and give alms, how can that benefit the holy souls? By applying the merits of these good works to the poor souls.

70. Why are the souls in purgatory called poor? Because they are in suffering and privation of Beatific vision and utterly unable to help themselves.

71. Which souls can we rightly call rich and happy? The souls in heaven.

72. For which of the souls in purgatory ought we to pray particularly? For those of our parents, brothers and sisters, relations, friends and benefactors.

73. What obliges us to this? The duty of love and gratitude.

74. Will purgatory still exist after the general judgment? No; there will then be only heaven and hell.

75. What proof have we of this? The proof of tradition.

76. What is the application? Never to imagine that nobody sees the evil we are doing, for nothing can escape the eye of God, "and all things that are done, God will bring into judgment, whether they be good or evil."

Dear children, I beg and beseech you to behave in such a way that you may not fall into the hands of this mighty and terrible Judge! Never forget that God is with you, and do not be content even if you have no grievous sins to reproach yourselves with, for God will punish severely all evil, as He will justly reward all good. As often as you look up to heaven, think of the unutterable happiness of the blessed. And as often as you see a funeral procession, reflect that you too, sooner or later, will have to appear before the judgment seat of God there to render an account of your actions and omissions.

XXXI.

Eighth Article of the Creed: "I Believe in the Holy Ghost."

Dear Children:—In the explanation of the Catechism we come to-day to the third part of the Apostles' Creed, namely, to the doctrine of the Holy Ghost as the third Person of the Godhead.

The Catechism asks: By whom is the fruit or grace of the divine redemption communicated to us? The answer is: "By the Holy Ghost."

Jesus brought us the divine truth and doctrine from heaven, opened heaven unto us by His death of expiation, and merited for us a boundless treasure of supernatural spiritual graces and blessings.

In consequence of original sin, however, we are too weak and too slothful to believe the doctrine of salvation announced by Jesus, and to make use of the proffered means of grace. But the Holy Ghost imparts to us by His illuminating grace the necessary strength

so that we may and can draw from the source of salvation which Jesus has opened to us. A similitude from nature will not be out of place here. The little humming-bird wanted to see the sun's glory. But he was not strong enough to soar up so high. He alighted, therefore, on the back of an eagle, who took him up to the glorious sun. Mankind resembles this frail little bird. Of our own strength we can not soar up to God. The Holy Ghost comes down from heaven, protects us against the enemies of our salvation and imparts to us the strength to obey the doctrine of Jesus, and to walk the path to heaven courageously. He enlightens our mind, therefore, that we may understand rightly the doctrine of Jesus, He confirms and strengthens our faith, the foundation of our salvation, and He so transforms us spiritually, that from sinners we become just, from the enemies of God we become His friends.

Where is this grace communicated to us? It is communicated to us in the Catholic Church, to which Christ has, for that very purpose, promised and sent the Holy Ghost. As at the miracle of the multiplication of loaves in the desert Jesus let the bread be distributed through His disciples, so does the Church, as Christ's representative upon earth, communicate the gifts of the Holy Ghost to the faithful. Hence the Church may rightly be called the treasury of the Holy Ghost.

Who is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God with the Father and the Son. The Holy Ghost, therefore, is not only an attribute of God, but a true, real Person.

The Holy Ghost is a Person of the Godhead. He thinks exactly as God, wills and acts as God, and the same perfections belong to Him, and in the same measure, as to the Father and the Son.

When we say: The Holy Ghost is the third Person, we do not mean that the Father and the Son have a preeminence, for in the Blessed Trinity no Person is older, none greater, none more powerful, and none more perfect than the others.

The Holy Ghost is therefore only called the third Person to distinguish Him from the two others. The following is a proof that the Holy Ghost is true God, like the Father and the Son. When Ananias tried to lie to Peter, the latter said to him: "Thou hast not lied to a man, but to God the Holy Ghost."

In Holy Scripture also attributes are given and ascribed to the Holy Ghost which belong only to God; for instance, 1. Omnipotence:

"The Holy Ghost shall descend upon thee and the power of the Most High overshadow thee; for with God nothing is impossible."

2. Omnipresence: "The spirit of the Lord fills the whole universe" (Ps. cxxxviii. 7-10).

3. Omniscience: "For the Spirit searcheth all things, even the profound things of God" (I. Cor. ii. 10).

In the Athanasian creed it says: "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God."

The Church confirms this belief in the Divinity of the Holy Ghost by the celebration of the feasts of Pentecost and of Holy Trinity, and also by the universal prayer of the Church: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

Other names are given to the Holy Ghost, as:

(a) A light, a fire, because He illumines our understanding for the comprehension of divine things, and warms our cold hearts with the fire of divine love.

(b) A teacher, because in the Old Testament the prophets and in the New Testament the apostles were instructed by Him, and because He prepares our hearts gladly to obey the doctrine of Jesus. The Holy Ghost also teaches man by interior inspiration and enlightenment.

(c) A consoler. The Holy Ghost animates us with the spirit of charity and penance. This brings consolation and peace to our hearts and the hope of life eternal.

(d) An advocate. The Holy Ghost intercedes with God for the confusion of evil doers and exhorts us Himself to ask of God what is necessary for the salvation of our souls.

(e) A gift of God, because God out of His infinite love has infused Him into our hearts.

From whom does the Holy Ghost proceed?

"The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, as from one source."

Holy Scripture gives us a proof of this. Jesus said: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things." This is also taught by theologians, and they say distinctly that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. Similitude: As the fruit comes from the tree, but the tree springs from the roots, so does the Holy Ghost proceed from the Father and the Son, as from one source.

At the same time you must not imagine that this proceeding of

the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son is a finite one, that once had a beginning, but that it is an eternal one, because the Holy Ghost is from all eternity, like the Father and the Son. Why is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity in particular named the "Holy Spirit," since the appellation of "Spirit" and "Holy" equally belongs to the first and second Persons?

Answer: Because the Holy Ghost sanctifies us by His grace, communicates to us sanctity of the spiritual life of grace, makes us pleasing to God, aids us in all good, grants us strength to love God, to renounce that which is earthly, and even to accomplish that which is most difficult for the kingdom of God, wherefore He is also named sanctifier and vivifier. Still you must not understand this as if the Father and Son did not participate therein, for you already know that the works of creation, redemption and sanctification are common to all three Persons of the Godhead.

This is apparent from the Scriptural text: "You are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God" (I. Cor. vi. 11).

Where is the Holy Ghost?

As omnipresent God He is everywhere; but as author and Dispenser of supernatural gifts and graces He is particularly:

(a) In the Catholic Church, and

(b) In the souls of the just.

As omnipresent God the Holy Ghost is everywhere, but according to His operations He is not everywhere, that is to say, He operates only where He wills. The Holy Ghost shows His operations preeminently: (a) In the Catholic Church.

Hence the Catechism asks: "When did Christ send down the Holy Ghost upon His Church?"

Upon Whitsunday, when in the form of fiery tongues He descended upon the apostles. Particularly remarkable are the circumstances under which He descended upon the apostles. On account of the celebration of the Jewish feast of Pentecost, there were assembled at Jerusalem thousands of Jews from all parts of the world. There arose a rushing sound like the roaring of a mighty windstorm. This was to draw the attention of the assembled multitude so that the minds of all present might be prepared for the preaching of St Peter.

The Holy Spirit appeared over the head of each of the apostles, in the form of a fiery tongue. Fire warms and gives light. The

tongue itself is the instrument of speech. The apostles still so fearful shortly before that they closed their house, felt themselves suddenly fortified by the miracle and able to speak foreign languages. Glowing with holy zeal, they began at once to preach Christ crucified, and to inflame the hearts of their listeners. Animated by a holy zeal they went forth into all parts of the universe, to propagate the doctrine of Christianity. From this time the Holy Ghost has never left the Catholic Church, for Jesus said: "When I shall have gone, I will send you another Comforter who will always remain with you until the end of the world."

For this reason the Catechism asks further: "What graces does the Holy Ghost dispense to the Catholic Church?" that is to say, in other words, What are the operations of the Holy Ghost in the Catholic Church? He teaches, sanctifies, and directs her in an invisible manner until the end of the world. The Holy Ghost, therefore, is the invisible teacher of the Church in her existing infallible office of teacher. He remains with the Church, preserves her from all error, and enlightens her to teach only that which harmonizes with the doctrine of Jesus and His apostles.

The Holy Ghost sanctifies the Church, i. e., gives her the fulness of His grace, so that all her members, when they cooperate earnestly with the means of salvation offered them (prayer and the sacraments) may be sanctified. The Holy Ghost also directs and rules His Church, i. e., He causes her to be at all times infallible in her doctrines, wise in her arrangements, and careful in the furthering of the salvation of her faithful.

What graces does the Holy Ghost dispense to souls?

He illumines them, sanctifies, fortifies, and consoles them, for which reason He is named Sanctifier and Comforter.

1. The Holy Ghost illumines our souls. An illumination is necessary where darkness reigns. The Holy Ghost illumines us, He causes us to understand and believe clearly and fully the truth of the doctrine of Jesus. Even the apostles did not understand many words of their Divine Teacher. When, however, the Holy Spirit descended upon them everything was clear and plain.

2. The Holy Ghost sanctifies our souls. By His grace which He communicates to us in Holy Baptism, our souls are cleansed from the guilt of original sin, and transformed from the state of disgrace to the state of grace. By the grace of the Holy Ghost we are also cleansed from the filth of actual sin, by being ani-

mated to conversion from the path of sin, and of turning toward God.

3. The Holy Ghost fortifies our souls. We have often heard that the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and that those only who use violence will obtain it. For this strife we obtain strength through the Holy Spirit to conquer the world, the devil, and the flesh which are the enemies of our salvation.

4. The Holy Spirit consoles our souls. Consolation is necessary in sufferings and afflictions. In all the cares and difficulties of this life, in sickness, poverty, want, etc., when we are despised, derided and mocked at, when our best intentions are misunderstood, then the Holy Spirit dispenses consolation to us; for He knows all things, and will reveal all things. He is the Comforter, who gives us that inward peace which the world can not give.

The operations of the Holy Spirit showed themselves particularly in the apostles and martyrs, and every Christian can perceive their effects in himself, when he invokes the Holy Spirit with faith and confidence, and renders a cheerful obedience to His inspirations.

What are in particular the gifts of the Holy Ghost?

"These seven: 1. Wisdom; 2. Understanding; 3. Counsel; 4. Fortitude; 5. Knowledge; 6. Godliness or Piety; and 7. The fear of the Lord."

1. The gift of wisdom illumines us to consider earnestly everything that concerns God and our eternal beatitude. It exhorts and encourages us to take the greatest delight in heavenly things, to despise everything earthly and perishable, and to direct our thoughts, desires, words and works only to that which is heavenly.

King Solomon prayed for this gift of wisdom, because he found therein a greater treasure than in all the riches of a long life.

2. By the gift of understanding we discern revealed truth which the sensual man can not comprehend. Through this gift we perceive that Divine Providence rules and directs all the occurrences of this world, we discern our high and holy destiny, as well as the true and right means which will lead us to God and our eternal salvation. By this great gift of God we are made aware of the horror of sin which can cause our eternal ruin. King David prayed for this gift with the words: "Give me understanding, and I will search into thy law and observe it with my whole heart."

3. The gift of counsel. By virtue of our free will we ought to act freely and execute the will of God upon earth. Through original

sin, however, our perception was darkened and our will to do good enfeebled. We hover frequently irresolute between good and evil, between right and wrong. It is the gift of counsel that counsels us to do right, to do that which is according to God's good pleasure, for the temporal and eternal salvation of ourselves and of our fellow men. The gift of counsel enables us to counsel others as to what is best for them.

4. The gift of fortitude. To will and to do good is joined with self-denial and hardships. The gift of fortitude, however, gives us courage, strength, and perseverance to overcome our sensual desires, to deny ourselves, and to persevere in that which is good, and to execute it no matter how difficult it may be. The holy martyrs were particularly endowed with this fortitude, for they endured the greatest tortures for the love of Jesus without a murmur or complaint.

5. The gift of knowledge. By this gift we receive the ability to employ everything that we know about natural truths and everything that we meet with in this world for the salvation of our soul. By it we are instructed in the mysteries and duties of our salvation, and we can also instruct others who are ignorant. The gift of true knowledge does not make us proud and puffed up, for it is humble and finds its happiness not in exterior honors, but in the improving and ennobling of man.

6. The gift of piety. It consists therein that we have at all times a holy joy in intercourse with God, in humble prayer, that we strive to please God our Infinitely loving Father, and only desire to live before God and with God.

7. The gift of the fear of God. There is a servile and a childlike fear. Servile fear trembles only before God's just chastisements. A true and childlike fear of God, however, consists in a holy awe of doing anything to offend or displease God, whereby we should lose the love and friendship of God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and the surest standard of the Christian life.

Besides the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost there are also twelve fruits, and they are: 1. Charity. 2. Joy. 3. Peace. 4. Patience. 5. Benignity. 6. Goodness. 7. Long suffering. 8. Mildness. 9. Faith. 10. Modesty. 11. Continence. 12. Chastity.

How long does the Holy Ghost remain in the soul?

As long as the soul is free from any grievous sin. Sanctity can only live in sanctity, not in anything sinful. Therefore the Holy

Ghost who sanctifies our souls in Baptism remains there only as long as we keep our souls free from every grievous sin.

"Does sin, then, drive the Holy Ghost from the soul?"

"Yes; mortal sin drives away the Holy Ghost," and profanes the temple of God.

Whoever commits sin is an enemy of God, and God can not dwell with His enemies.

Holy Writ says: "But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which you are" (I. Cor. iii. 17).

What must we do in order to participate in the gifts of the Holy Ghost and to preserve them within us?

1. We must keep our hearts free from every sin, from all sinful desires, thoughts, discourses, and actions, for sin, as we have heard, is an obstacle to the Holy Spirit.

2. We should pray to God frequently and constantly for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, remembering the words of Scripture: "God will give his good spirit to all those who ask him for it." The Holy Spirit is invoked particularly before the sermon and instructions, before announcing the Word of God. This is done that our hearts may be prepared for instruction in those things pertaining to our salvation, that we may rejoice in the word of God, that we may the better understand it, that we may receive it like good seed to bear fruit within us a hundredfold. As the Holy Ghost once animated the apostles to go forth into the whole world and announce the doctrine of Jesus, so should the Holy Spirit inflame our hearts to live according to the same. The operations of the Holy Spirit are opposed to the operations of the spirit of the world. Whilst the Holy Ghost uplifts us to that which is heavenly and eternal, the spirit of the world draws our senses toward that which is earthly and transitory. You must not obey this worldly spirit and its hurtful suggestions, but strive to receive the Holy Spirit within your hearts, and by avoiding every sin to preserve Him and faithfully to obey His inspirations.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. On what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? On the eighth article of the creed.

2. What says the eighth article? I believe in the Holy Ghost.

3. Who is the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God with the Father and the Son.

4. The Catechism asks: By whom is the fruit or grace of the Divine Redemption communicated to us? By the Holy Ghost.

5. Who brought us the divine doctrine from heaven? Jesus Christ.

6. Who redeemed us, and through His death opened heaven to us again? Jesus Christ.

7. Why then are the operations of grace of the Holy Spirit still necessary? Because we are too weak and too slothful to believe the doctrine announced by Jesus and to make use of His means of grace.

8. It means, therefore, that mankind is weak and slothful. Now what is needed where weakness reigns? Where weakness exists, strength and fortitude are needed.

9. What is wanted where sloth reigns? Where there is sloth, there life and encouragement are needed.

10. Who gives us this spiritual strength and life? The Holy Ghost.

11. In what way does the Holy Spirit aid us to know God and to serve Him? He illumines our reason, that we may the better understand the doctrine of Jesus, and inflames our heart that we may also obey it.

12. Where is this grace of illumination and strengthening communicated to us? In the Catholic Church, to which Christ has, for that very purpose, promised and sent the Holy Ghost.

13. What, for this reason, may we justly name the Church? The treasury of the Holy Ghost.

14. Why do we say that the Holy Ghost is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity? Because Jesus named the Holy Ghost in the third place.

15. Upon what occasion? When Jesus sent His Disciples forth, He said to them: Go, and teach all nations and baptize them "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

16. How can you prove to me that the Holy Ghost is true God, like the Father and the Son? From Holy Scripture. When Ananias tried to lie to the Apostle Peter, the latter said to him: Thou hast not lied to men but to God the Holy Ghost.

17. What further proof did I quote? In Holy Writ the divine attributes are imputed to Him.

18. What divine perfections are attributed to the Holy Ghost? Omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

19. What says the Athanasian Creed of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost? It says: The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.

20. In what way does the Catholic Church confirm the belief in the Divinity of the Holy Ghost? By the celebration of the feasts of Pentecost and of Holy Trinity.

21. In what other manner? By the universal prayer of the Church: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

22. What other names are given to the Holy Ghost? He is called a light, a fire.

23. Why is He called a light? Because He illumines our understanding to comprehend divine things.

24. Why is He called a fire? Because He inflames our hearts with the fire of divine love.

25. What other name is given to the Holy Ghost? He is called also Teacher.

26. For what reason? Because He enlightened the prophets in the Old Law, and the apostles in the New.

27. Why is the Holy Ghost called a Comforter? Because He infuses the spirit of penance into our hearts, whereby we obtain consolation and peace.

28. Where is the Holy Ghost? As omnipresent God He is everywhere; but as Author and Dispenser of supernatural gifts and graces He is particularly (a) in the Catholic Church and (b) in the souls of the just.

29. Why is the Holy Ghost particularly in the Catholic Church? Because Jesus Christ before His ascension promised the Holy Ghost to His Church.

30. When was the Holy Ghost sent down upon the Church? Upon the feast of Pentecost, when He descended upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues.

31. What graces does the Holy Ghost still dispense in the Catholic Church? He teaches, sanctifies, and directs her in an invisible manner until the end of the world.

32. From what does the Holy Ghost preserve His Church or her teaching office? From all error.

33. What means: The Holy Ghost sanctifies the Church? Christ left to His Church the means whereby we could and should become holy.

34. What are these means? They are the Holy Sacraments.

35. What means the Holy Ghost directs the Church? He causes the Church at all times to make only such dispositions as serve to promote the salvation of souls.

36. What graces and blessings does the Holy Ghost dispense to souls? He illumines, sanctifies, fortifies, and consoles them, wherefore He is also called Sanctifier and Consoler.

37. What means to illumine anything? It means to enlighten.

38. When is an illumination necessary? When darkness reigns.

39. Where do we receive the gift of sanctification from the Holy Ghost? In the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

40. From what are we cleansed in Baptism? From original sin.

41. Does the Holy Ghost cleanse us from actual sin also? Yes; the Holy Spirit cleanses us also from actual sin.

42. The Holy Ghost strengthens our souls. What means to strengthen? To strengthen means to make strong.

43. Why must men be made strong? Because they are weak and inclined to evil.

44. What weakens our strength to do good? The consequences of original sin.

45. The Holy Ghost also comforts our souls. In what way does He console us? By interior inspirations.

46. What do we obtain thereby? Interior peace, tranquillity of soul.

47. To whom in particular has the Holy Ghost granted the gift of fortitude? To the holy martyrs, and they were thereby enabled to suffer every kind of torture, even the most agonizing death.

48. Do we receive the gift of fortitude in tribulations and want? Yes; when we pray to the Holy Ghost for it.

49. What are the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost? 1. Wisdom. 2. Understanding. 3. Counsel. 4. Fortitude. 5. Knowledge. 6. Piety. 7. The fear of the Lord.

50. What are the effects of the gift of wisdom? It enables us to consider earnestly everything pertaining to God and our eternal salvation, and to despise that which is earthly and transitory.

51. What purpose does the gift of understanding serve? It helps us to perceive and to comprehend many revealed truths.

52. Who stand in need of counsel, which is the third gift of the Holy Ghost? Those who do not what they ought to do.

53. What persons require to be strengthened? Those who are weak.

54. Of what weakness is it here a question? Of weakness to do good.

55. To what does the gift of wisdom relate; to earthly and worldly, or to heavenly and eternal things? It relates to that which is heavenly and eternal.

56. What is the sixth gift of the Holy Ghost? The gift of piety.

57. When are persons pious? When they pray gladly and devoutly and take pleasure in intercourse with God.

58. How many kinds are there of the fear of God? There are two: A servile and a childlike fear.

59. Which is the right and true fear of God? The childlike fear of God.

60. What says Holy Writ concerning the fear of God? It says: The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

61. How long will the Holy Ghost remain in the Catholic Church? Until the end of the world.

62. Whence do you know this? From Holy Scripture, which says: "I will send you a Comforter who will remain with you until the end of the world."

63. How long does the Holy Ghost remain in the souls of the just? As long as they preserve them free from all grievous sin.

64. When do we receive the Holy Ghost for the first time? In Holy Baptism.

65. When do we receive Him again? In the Sacrament of Confirmation.

66. How long ought the Holy Ghost to dwell in the hearts or souls of men? As long as they live.

67. What drives the Holy Ghost out of our souls? Sin.

68. Why is this? Because the Holy Ghost is holy and loves only good and abhors evil.

69. What is every sinner toward God? Every sinner is an enemy of God.

70. Why are we called temples of God? Because God dwells within us.

71. Through what is this temple violated? By sin.

72. With what has God threatened those who violate the temple of God by sin? He has threatened them with destruction.

73. What does this mean? That God will punish them with eternal damnation.

74. What must you do under that the Holy Ghost may remain in your soul? I must avoid every sin.

Therefore, dear children, hate and avoid all sin. You also are the temples of the Holy Ghost. God has destined you for His dwelling place. Be therefore modest, pious, Godfearing, and beg of God every day that He may send the Holy Spirit to you to remain with you all the days of your life.

XXXII.

NINTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED: "THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH; THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS."

DEAR CHILDREN:—In the explanation of the Catechism we come to-day to the ninth article of the creed, which treats:

1. Of a holy universal Church, and

2. Of the communion of saints.

The doctrine of the Church is again divided into four separate paragraphs, and treats:

The first paragraph, of the Church in general;

The second paragraph, of the marks of the Church;

The third paragraph, of the end of the Church;

The fourth paragraph, of the propagation and preservation of the Church.

1. On the Church in general.

Above all you must take notice that the Church of which it is here question is not an edifice of stone, but a society or community. You heard in the preceding instruction that upon the feast of Pentecost the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles, and not only took away all fear from them, but also granted them the gift of foreign languages. The Catechism now asks: "What did the apostles do after they had received the Holy Ghost on Whitsunday?"

Answer: They went forth into the whole world preaching and baptizing and gathered into congregations all those who believed and were baptized. Jesus not only came for the men of His time, but for the people of all times, and not only for the people of one nation, but for the people of the whole universe. As He Himself only taught in the land of Juda, He chose in the early days of His teaching twelve simple, honest, and truth loving men, who were continually with Him and witnessed His teachings and miracles.

These men, called apostles or messengers, were to continue after Jesus had accomplished the stupendous work of redemption for all mankind, that which He Himself had begun. They were to pass over the borders of Juda into all parts of the earth and take the message of the kingdom of Christ, and offer to all who wished to be saved the graces of His death of atonement. For this reason, be-

fore His ascension, Jesus commanded His apostles to "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them," etc. The apostles carried out this injunction of their Lord and Master with a holy zeal, they went into all lands. Peter went first of all to Antioch, afterward to Rome; Mark went to Alexandria; Luke taught in Italy, Dalmatia, Macedonia, and Egypt; Bartholomew in Persia, Arabia, and the East Indies; John in Samaria and Asia Minor; Paul in Asia Minor, Greece and other countries; Andrew went to Scythia and Thrace; Thomas taught the Parthenians, Medes, and Persians; Philip preached in Phrygia, to announce and spread the teachings of Jesus.

Those who accepted the teaching of Jesus were baptized and belonged to the Catholic Church. The newly-converted formed congregations among themselves.

What arose from these congregations of believers?

There arose in many places communities of Christians whose rulers were the apostles. The first Christian community was formed at Jerusalem. It consisted of about 150 persons, and the ruler of the same was the apostle St. Peter. On Whitsunday, when the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles, St. Peter arose and preached Jesus risen. The consequence was that 3,000 persons were converted to Christianity. Peter preached again to the people, and the number of those who received baptism was 5,000. In this way the doctrine of Christianity was propagated and the prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled: "I will make you become fishers of men."

What further did the apostles do when the communities of Christians increased?

They chose elders from among them, ordained them bishops, and appointed them everywhere as rulers of the new Christian communities, with the commission that they should likewise ordain and appoint others.

When the number of the faithful increased, the apostles could not announce the teaching of Jesus everywhere in the several communities, because they were called upon to propagate it in an ever-increasing circuit. They were obliged, therefore, to appoint other rulers and to confer upon them their authority. As, for instance, a family can not exist without a ruling head, so also a community can not exist without a chief.

Were all these several communities united with one another?

Yes; they were all closely united with one another, and formed one great Christian community, under one common head, St. Peter.

The several Christian communities, therefore, were not to be separated, dispersed members, but they were to be members of one body and form an indissoluble whole.

What did they call this great community of Christians under one common head?

The Catholic, that is to say, the universal Church, or in one word the Church.

I must repeat what I said at the beginning of this instruction, that by the word Church you must not imagine a stone building, but a society and community of all true believing Christians of whom the apostle St. Peter was the common head. The Acts of the Apostles give us a proof of this. As soon as the apostles wished to give laws for the Church, they associated themselves with St. Peter. He presided, and they all submitted to his decision. Even the apostle St. Paul left Jerusalem in peril of his life to visit St. Peter at Rome. In Holy Writ the Church has other names given to her: for instance, the Bride of Christ. As bride and bridegroom are inseparably united, so inseparably is the Church united with Jesus, her heavenly bridegroom. The Church is called also the Body of Christ, i. e., members of Christ, because He Himself is the invisible Head of the Church. She is called also a flock, because Jesus the good Shepherd leads her.

What, then, is the Church even at the present time?

The Church is the same congregation of all the faithful, who, being baptized, profess the same doctrine, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible Head, the Pope.

The Church, therefore, is the union, the congregation, the society of the people of the whole earth who are baptized in the name of Jesus, who profess the faith taught by Jesus, live according to His doctrine, partake of the means of salvation instituted by Him, and acknowledge the Pope at Rome as their Visible Head and as the representative and successor of the apostle St. Peter, to whom all bishops are subject. The Church of the New Law was prefigured in the Old Law: (a) By Noe's ark. As all men might have been saved from death by the flood in Noe's ark, so may all those who by baptism are taken into the Church be saved from the danger of eternal death.

Another figure is the city of Jerusalem. As in the Old Law sacrifice could only be offered in this city of God, so also in the Church

of the New Law alone can that sacrifice be offered which is pleasing to God.

Was the Church thus organized by the apostles?

No; she was thus organized by Jesus Christ, her Founder; the apostles were only the instruments by which He accomplished His will.

Christ said: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth." "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." From Him, therefore, proceeds all power, all authority, and the commission to accomplish His will. Jesus founded and instituted His Church, the kingdom of God on earth. He gave her her laws and her organization, but He made the apostles the instruments of His will. They do not act, therefore, in their own name, but in the name of Jesus Christ. St. Paul says: "Every one takes us for servants of Christ and dispensers of His mysteries." A servant, however, does not accomplish his own will, but the will of his master. The apostles, therefore, were instruments of whom God made use to propagate in the world His holy Christian Church.

How did Jesus Christ thus organize His Church?

By conferring His own power upon the apostles, and sending them forth everywhere: 1. To preach; 2. To baptize; 3. To govern those who were baptized under the supremacy of St. Peter.

The apostles and their successors, therefore, have the same power as Jesus Himself had. Before Christ ascended into heaven, He said to His apostles: "All power is given to me in heaven, and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Christ conferred herewith His authority upon His apostles and declared what they were to do in virtue of this authority, namely: To proclaim His doctrine to all nations, to dispense the graces of the Redemption through Baptism, and to introduce everywhere His laws, His commandments. He had already said to His apostles, "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." When He had said this He breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." With these words Jesus conferred upon His apostles the power to forgive sins, which belongs to God alone. Jesus demands also from men the same

obedience toward the apostles and their successors as for Himself. He says: "He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me."

What do you call the threefold office which together with His power Christ conferred upon the apostles?

The Teaching, the Priestly, and the Pastoral office.

1. The Teaching office consists in the full power to preach the divine doctrine, to condemn heresies, and to decide religious controversies.

2. The Priestly office consists in the full power to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass, to administer the sacraments, to consecrate and to bless.

3. The Pastoral office consists in the full power to rule the Church, consequently to make laws and inflict punishments.

Why were the apostles to exercise their office only under the supreme authority of St. Peter?

Because Christ appointed St. Peter to be His representative upon earth, and the visible head of the whole Church.

How do we learn that Christ has appointed St. Peter to be the Supreme Head of His Church?

We learn it from this: 1. That Christ built His Church upon Peter, as upon the true foundation stone; 2. That He gave him in particular the keys of the kingdom of heaven; 3. That He commissioned him alone to feed His whole flock.

Jesus once asked His disciples whom they considered Him to be; thereupon Peter, speaking for the others, said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered him: "Thou art Peter (a rock), and upon this rock I will build my Church."

Christ gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven with the words: "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." These keys signify the supreme authority in the Church. Jesus wished to confirm by this exterior token that He conferred upon Peter the highest authority in the Church. Peter alone was commissioned to govern the whole flock with the words: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

Peter also really exercised the office of the Head of the Church after the ascension of Jesus, and was also always recognized as the Head by the apostles and by the whole Church.

Was the supremacy of a Head of the Church to cease after the death of St. Peter?

No; if the Church was to continue as Christ had established it, the Rock also on which He had built it, and the supremacy of a Head which He Himself had ordained to govern it were to continue.

Now, if it was necessary for the Church to have a Head when the number of her members was still small, how much more necessary is it when the Church is extended and spread over the whole world.

Who has been the visible Head of the Church since the death of St. Peter?

The Holy Father, the Pope, who is the legitimate successor of St. Peter in the Episcopal See of Rome.

St. Peter died a martyr's death at Rome, and hence every Bishop of Rome is a successor of St. Peter. The word Pope comes from Papa, meaning Father; hence we say Holy Father instead of Pope, Father of Christendom. Was the threefold office, which was common to all the apostles, to continue at all times?

Yes; according to the appointment of Christ, it was to pass over from the apostles to their successors, and to continue in them, without interruption, to the end of the world.

How do we we know this appointment of Christ?

From the words which He spoke when He conferred the office upon them: "And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world;" which evidently can not be understood to have been said to the apostles alone, since they, of course, were not to live to the end of the world.

Who are the successors of the apostles?

The Bishops who are rightly consecrated, and are in communion with the Head of the Church, the Pope—i. e., the Bishops of the Catholic Church. The apostles chose "elders" to be Bishops to whom they communicated their authority, amidst prayer and the laying on of hands, and this ordination has been preserved from the time of the apostles until our time, and it will continue until the end of the world. The Bishops, therefore, when they are rightly consecrated, have the same authority and the same power as the apostles had. This power, however, they only use in constant communion with the Pope as legitimate successor of the apostle St. Peter.

As successors of the apostles the Bishops have the obligation: 1. To instruct and to cause to be instructed the faithful of the

diocese intrusted to them, and to care for the preserving of a pure faith, by keeping far from them everything contrary to the faith of the Church;

2. To dispense the Holy Sacraments, or to have them dispensed by their representatives; and

3. To make arrangements for the celebration of divine worship, to uphold ecclesiastical discipline, and above all to promote the spiritual welfare of their flocks.

The Bishops exercise their apostolic authority by assembling occasionally in council under the presidency of the Pope, and with the assistance of the Holy Spirit decide upon heresies that arise, and truths of faith which are attacked.

Through whom do the Bishops exercise their office in the particular parishes of their diocese?

Through the priests or pastors ordained by them. Besides the twelve apostles, Jesus chose seventy-two disciples to preach His doctrine.

When the doctrine of Jesus became more and more propagated the Bishops could no longer preach and dispense the sacraments in their own person. They appointed therefore assistants in several places; these are the priests or pastors who in the name of the Bishop preach the Gospel and dispense the sacraments, and in general care for the spiritual welfare of the faithful in their congregations. A priest can only exercise the duties of the priesthood when he has been expressly sent or authorized for that purpose by his lawful Bishop.

By what means are unity and good order maintained in the whole Church?

By this: That all those who are not priests are with ready obedience subordinate to the priests, the priests to the Bishops, and the Bishops to the Pope.

As in nature the imperfect creatures are subordinate to the perfect, and in public official life the subjects are subordinate to their several chiefs, just such a wise arrangement exists in the Catholic Church. Hence St. Clement, disciple and successor of St. Peter, compares the Church to an army in which the private is subordinate to the officer, the officer to the colonel, the colonel to the general.

Application: Always cherish in your heart a profound reverence and an humble submission to the Holy Father the Pope, and to the Bishops and priests united with him; for they are set over you in

the place of God, and it is their duty to instruct you in the name of God, to make you partake of the divine graces, and to lead you to eternal salvation. For this reason, therefore, the Church is called a "loving mother." The same affection that a child has for its mother, the faithful should evince for their Church, for she is solicitous for our soul's salvation, our eternal welfare.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. On what have we spoken to-day? On the ninth article of the creed.

2. What is the ninth article of the creed? "The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints."

3. How is the doctrine of the Church subdivided? Into four paragraphs.

4. Of what do they treat? 1. Of the Church in general. 2. Of the marks of the Church. 3. Of the end of the Church. 4. Of the propagation and preservation of the Church.

5. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the Church in general.

6. In the last instruction we heard that the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles at Jerusalem on Whitsunday. Now what effect did this have upon the apostles? They were able to speak foreign languages and they were without fear.

7. Why did Jesus send the Holy Spirit upon the apostles? To prepare them for the founding of His Church.

8. Now what did the apostles do after they had received the Holy Ghost? They went forth into all parts of the world, preaching, baptizing, and gathered into congregations all those who believed and were baptized.

9. Could the apostles not have gone sooner into the world to preach the Gospel? No; they could not have done so sooner, because they had not yet the gift of foreign languages, and because they were afraid of the Jews.

10. What did Jesus do at the outset of His teaching office? He choose for Himself twelve apostles.

11. What does the word apostle mean? It means messenger or ambassador.

12. How did Jesus instruct and strengthen them in their faith in Him? He kept them with Him for three years, and they were witnesses of His teaching and miracles.

13. Did the apostles carry out the commission given them by Jesus to "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"? Yes; they baptized all those who accepted the doctrine of Jesus.

14. What did those become who were baptized? They became Catholics.

15. Where was the first Christian community founded? At Jerusalem; it numbered about one hundred and twenty persons.

16. By whom was it founded? By the Apostle St. Peter.

17. What did the apostles do when the communities of Christians increased? They chose elders from amongst them, and ordained them bishops, and appointed them everywhere as rulers of the new Christian communities.

18. Were all these several communities united with one another? Yes; they were closely united with one another, and formed one great Christian community under one common head, St. Peter.

19. What was this great Christian community called? The universal Church, or the Church.

20. What other names were given to the Christian Church? She was called the "Bride of Christ," also the body of Christ.

21. Why? Because Christ is the Head.

22. What then is the Church even at the present time? The Church is the same congregation of the faithful, who being baptized, profess the same doctrine, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under the visible head, the Pope.

23. To be a good Christian then, is it enough to be baptized? No; we must also believe what Jesus has taught, and live according to this belief.

24. To whom are all Christians subordinate? To the Pope at Rome.

25. Why? Because He is the legitimate successor of St. Peter.

26. By what was the Church of the New Law prefigured in the Old Law? By Noe's Ark and the city of Jerusalem.

27. Why was Noe's Ark a figure of the Christian Church? As in the Ark, Noe and his family were saved from the flood, so can all those who belong to the Christian Church be saved from eternal death.

28. Why is the city of Jerusalem also a figure of the Christian Church? As sacrifice could only be offered to God in the Temple at Jerusalem, so in the Church of the New Law alone can that sacrifice be offered to God by which He is well pleased.

29. Who is the invisible head of the Church? Our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

30. Who is the visible head of the Church? The Pope, as successor of St. Peter.

31. Who are the other rulers of the Church besides the Pope? The bishops subordinate to him as successors of the other apostles.

32. Was the Church thus organized by the apostles? No; she was thus organized by Jesus Christ, her Founder; the apostles were only the instruments by which He accomplished His will.

33. How did Jesus thus organize His Church? By conferring His own power upon the apostles, and sending them forth everywhere: 1. To preach; 2. To baptize; and 3. To govern those who were baptized, under the supremacy of St. Peter.

34. What do we call the threefold office which, together with His power, Christ conferred upon the apostles? The Teaching, the Priestly, and the Pastoral office.

35. What then are the rulers of the Church? They are: 1. Teachers. 2. Priests, and 3. Pastors.

36. In what, therefore, does the teaching office consist? It consists in the authority to preach the Divine Doctrine, to condemn heresies, and to decide religious controversies.

37. In what consists the Priestly office? It consists in the full power to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass, to administer the Sacraments, to consecrate, to bless.

38. In what consists the Pastoral office? It consists in the full power to rule the Church, consequently to make laws and inflict punishments.

39. What does the bishop carry, therefore, on solemn occasions in his hand? A shepherd's staff.

40. Whom did Christ appoint as the Supreme Head of the Church? The Apostle St. Peter.

41. From what do we learn that Christ has appointed St. Peter to be the Supreme Head of His Church? We learn it from this: 1. That Christ

built His Church upon Peter, as upon a true foundation stone. 2. That He gave him in particular the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and 3. That He commissioned him alone to feed His whole flock.

42. With what words did Jesus appoint St. Peter? Jesus said: "Thou art Peter (a rock), and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

43. It says: Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to St. Peter. Has, then, heaven a gate or door? It is not to be understood literally. It means that Jesus conferred upon St. Peter the supreme authority.

44. Jesus also commissioned St. Peter alone to rule the whole flock? Yes; Jesus said: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

45. What did Jesus confer upon St. Peter with these words? The Pastoral office.

46. What power is united with the Pastoral office? The power to punish and to excommunicate.

47. What is the government of Peter over the other apostles called? The Supremacy of Peter.

48. Was the Supremacy of a Head of the Church to cease after the death of St. Peter? No; for if the Church was to continue, so also must the Rock continue upon which Christ had built it.

49. Who has been the visible Head of the Church since the death of St. Peter? The Bishop of Rome, commonly called the Pope, who is the legitimate Successor of St. Peter in the Episcopal See of Rome.

50. Why is the Pope called Holy Father? Because he cares for the faithful of the Catholic Church as a father cares for his family.

51. Was the threefold office, which was common to all the apostles, to continue at all times? Yes; according to the appointment of Christ, it was to pass from the apostles to their successors, and to continue in them, without interruption, to the end of the world.

52. How do we know this appointment of Christ? From the words which He spoke when He conferred the office upon them: "And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," which evidently can not be understood to have been said to the apostles alone, since they, of course, were not to live to the end of the world.

53. Who are the successors of the apostles? The bishops who are rightly consecrated, and are in communion with the Head of the Church, the Pope—i. e., the bishops of the Catholic Church.

54. In what manner do the bishops rule the Church? 1. Each bishop governs the diocese or bishopric assigned to him by the Pope. 2. By representation at the general councils of the Church.

55. Through whom do the bishops exercise their office in the particular parishes of their dioceses? Through the priests or pastors sent to them.

56. Of whom are the priests the successors? Of the seventy-two disciples.

57. What are the duties of the priests or pastors? They have, in the name of the bishop, to preach the Gospel, to administer the Sacraments, and to care for the spiritual welfare of their congregations.

58. Can the priests administer all the Sacraments? No; they can not administer the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders.

59. By what means are unity and good order maintained in the whole Church? By this; that all those who are not priests are with ready obedience subordinate to the priests, the priests to the bishops, and the bishops to the Pope.

60. Who, therefore, in this gradual succession, takes the lowest place? The non-priests, commonly called the laity.

61. To whom are they subordinate? To the priests, who in their turn are subject to the bishops, and the bishops are subordinate to the Pope.
62. To whom is the Pope subordinate? To God.

You know, children, that we should be grateful to our benefactors, and the greater the kindness shown to us, the greater ought our thanks to be. You thank those who give you bread when you are hungry. Why, then, should you not be grateful to the Church that gives you the Bread of life? You are grateful for a drink of water when you are parched with thirst. Why, then, should you not thank the Church who fortifies you with graces from the source of life? You give thanks to parents because they look after your body. Why should you not give thanks to the Church who is solicitous for your supreme good, for your soul's salvation? Honor, therefore, not only the Pope and the Bishops, but honor also your priests. You should preserve this gratitude and reverence for your pastors all through life, and show it in word and deed.

How highly Jesus esteemed His Church may be seen from His words: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me." Be therefore always submissive in love and gratitude to our Holy Church and her priests.

XXXIII.

On the Marks of the True Church.

Dear Children:—After having examined in our last instruction the doctrine of the Church in general, we come to-day to the doctrine of the marks of the Church.

A mark is a characteristic whereby one thing is distinguished from another, by which, therefore, we can recognize it. It is a question here of the marks of the Church, of those characteristics by which we can recognize her to be the right and true Church, and distinguish her from those others which are not the true Church. The Catechism asks: "Has Christ established one Church, or more than one?"

Christ has established only one Church, as He has taught but one Faith, instituted one Baptism, and ordained one Teaching and Pastoral office for all nations.

This question may perhaps appear strange to you, but it is inserted here because there are so many different Christian professions or denominations which claim also to belong to the one true Church.

But this is not the case. While, for instance, the Catholic Church teaches that good works are necessary for salvation, other denominations teach that they are not necessary, but that faith alone will save us. While the Catholic Church teaches that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is an unbloody renewal of Christ's death of expiation upon the cross, non-Catholics call it idolatry. While the Catholic Church believes in an infallible teaching office, the non-Catholics reject this, and pretend to interpret Scripture each one in their own way. Hence you see how essentially the belief of other Christian denominations differs from that of the Catholic Church.

That Christ has only established one Church Holy Scripture gives us proof in the following passage: Jesus said to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my church." Had Jesus intended to establish several Christian churches He would have said: "Upon this rock I will build my churches." It is then necessary to mention those marks and characteristics whereby we may recognize the true Church of Christ.

By what marks may the true Church of Christ be known?

The true Church of Christ may be known by these four marks: 1. She is One; 2. She is Holy; 3. She is Catholic; and 4. She is Apostolic. A church that claims to be the true Church of Christ must therefore bear the above mentioned four marks, and where this is not the case, then she is not the true Church of Christ. The first mark, then, of the true Church of Christ is unity. Unity exists in a community when one wills what the others will; when every member mutually pursues the same end. Unity is opposed to disunion. A society is disunited when one wills one thing and another something else. The Catholic Church is then one because she has at all times and everywhere: 1. The same faith, 2. The same sacrifice and the same sacraments; 3. One common head.

Above all things, then, the Catholic Church is one in her faith, i. e., she has at all times and in all places taught the same doctrine which has come down to her from Jesus and His apostles, and there has never been a time in the Catholic Church when she has ever taught anything contrary to the doctrine of Jesus and His apostles. Whoever teaches other doctrines persists in a heresy, and excludes himself from the Catholic Church. For instance, we believe that there is only one God in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Now, the Catholics in China believe this as well as the Catholics of other countries, because the Catholic Church is

one in her doctrine. The Catholic Church teaches that after this earthly life there is another life which will last eternally, where an eternal reward awaits the good, but eternal punishment awaits the wicked. This is believed by the members of the whole Catholic Church because she is one in her doctrine. As there is only one sun for our earth which illumines and heats the whole universe, so also in the Catholic Church there is only one faith, only one doctrine. Let us take for example the protestant denomination. There are Lutherans, Episcopalians, Quakers, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, etc.; each sect has a different belief. Is that unity in faith? Most certainly not. Unity in faith can never be destroyed; for through the infallible teaching office of the Church Jesus has made it impossible that a false doctrine or heresy can be propagated in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is also one, 2. In her sacrifice and in her sacraments. The sacrifice which is everywhere offered up in the Catholic Church is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and throughout the world where there are Catholic priests there it is offered up. The Catholic Church is one also in her sacraments. At all times and in all places there have never been more nor less than seven holy sacraments; not, therefore, in one place nine or ten and in another place three, four, or five, but in the whole Catholic Church there are seven holy sacraments.

Finally the Church is one also in her Head. At all times and in all places the Roman Pontiff has been acknowledged as the visible Head of the Church, and all the Bishops, priests, and laity of the Catholic world have acknowledged the duty of obedience toward him.

Why is the Roman Catholic Church evidently holy?

1. Because her Founder is holy, and she teaches a holy doctrine.

2. Because she faithfully preserves and dispenses all the means of sanctification instituted by Christ; and

3. Because there are in her at all times saints whose holiness God confirms by miracles and extraordinary graces. The Founder of the Catholic Church is Jesus Christ the Son of God Himself, He who could say to the Jews: "Who amongst you can accuse me of sin?" The doctrine also of the Catholic Church is holy. She makes us resemble God, teaches us to do good and to shun evil, and leads us thereby to our own sanctification.

1. Nowhere in the Catholic Church shall we find that anything good is forbidden or anything bad commanded.

2. To lead us to holiness the Catholic Church dispenses the means of salvation instituted by Jesus Christ, the holy sacraments, preaches the Divine Word to us, offers up for us the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and neglects nothing that can serve for our sanctification.

3. Lastly, the Catholic Church is holy because there have always been saints in her. All members of the Catholic Church without exception are sanctified through holy baptism, i. e., they are consecrated to God, and called to holiness. Besides this many members have attained to perfect sanctity, which has been confirmed by miracles from God. Who can count the army of holy martyrs or the multitude of holy virgins? If even certain members of the Catholic Church lead unholy lives, the Church ceases as little on that account to be holy as a man with a deaf ear, a blind eye or a crippled finger ceases to be a man.

Does a gold coin lose its value by falling in the mud? Does a precious stone lose its value by lying under a paving stone? Christ Himself has compared His Church to a field in which wheat and cockle grows, to a net which gathers in good and bad fish, to a wedding banquet at which the worthy and unworthy take part. For this reason Christ Himself has instituted for those who fall, the Holy Sacrament of Penance, through which they may again become holy and upright. We see, therefore, from all this that the Catholic Church is holy.

Why is the Church evidently Catholic or universal?

1. Because she has continually existed from the time of Christ; 2. Because she is spread over the whole world; and 3. Because she is constantly spreading more and more.

1. The Church has always been from the time of Christ, i. e., for more than 1900 years there has not been a single day or hour that she ceased to be. Through this miracle the promise of Jesus is fulfilled: "And behold I am with you all days until the end of the world." The Catholic Church, then, has existed for more than 1900 years. The greatest storms were incapable of destroying her, the greater the persecution, the more brilliantly did she shine. Other religious congregations who also call themselves churches fell away from truth, and are therefore not Catholic.

2. The Catholic Church is spread everywhere. This is testified to by the 200,000,000 of Christians who live in all parts of the globe.

3. The Catholic Church also spreads more every day.

Those men who go fearlessly into the remotest parts of the earth

and preach the Gospel of Jesus to the heathen and cannibal at peril of their lives are called missionaries. For the education of these missionaries there exists at Rome a magnificent institution called the Propaganda, where those men who intend to be missionaries are instructed in all the known languages of the earth. In this institution they celebrate annually the so-called feast of languages, when sermons are delivered in different languages. The Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, Redemptorists, Lazarists, etc., also labor continually with a holy zeal for the propagation of the Catholic Church in the remotest countries of the earth. To provide these men with the necessary means, there exist everywhere missionary societies. By the conversion of heathen people the Catholic Church is compensated for the loss which she sustains by the falling away of slothful and wicked members.

Why is the Roman Catholic Church evidently apostolic?

1. Because her origin and doctrine are apostolic.

2. Because her rulers, the Pope and the Bishops are legitimate successors of the apostles.

(a) The origin of the Catholic Church leads us back to the apostles, as Christ founded and built His Church altogether upon the apostles, but particularly upon the Apostle Peter. It was to the apostles that Christ transferred His own power, with the commission to consecrate and establish others, and the Holy Ghost was to be their helper until the end of the world. The apostles made use of this power, and as in a chain the links reach from the first to the last, so does the Catholic Church go back to the time of the apostles. This is not the case with the non-Catholic religions, for they exist through apostasy from the true Church. The doctrine of the Catholic Church is also apostolic, for it contains only those truths which she received from the apostles, and the apostles from Christ. No doctrine which is contrary to the doctrine of the apostles can find admittance or propagation in the Catholic Church. Therefore St. Paul the apostle says to the faithful of Ephesus: "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles" (Eph. ii. 20).

If we examine the doctrines of non-Catholic religions we find that they are contrary to the doctrines received from the apostles; they are therefore not apostolic.

(b) The Catholic Church is apostolic, therefore, because her rulers, Pope and Bishops, are the legitimate successors of the apostles. The apostles received their apostolic mission from Christ and

gave it to their successors with the power to consecrate and establish others. And thus the apostolical mission of the apostles is transmitted to their legitimate successors until the end of the world.

If, then, none but the Roman Catholic Church has the marks of the one Church of Christ, what follows?

That the Roman Catholic Church alone is the true Church established by Jesus Christ. There is only one truth, only one true doctrine, only one way which leads to life. Hence Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one cometh to the Father but through me." As therefore there is only one truth, there can also be only one true Church, and this is the Roman Catholic, for she alone bears the marks of the true Church of Christ. She alone is one, she alone is holy, she alone is Catholic, she alone is apostolic. Non-Catholic religions have not a single one of these marks, therefore they can not claim that they belong to the true Church of Christ.

Application: Pray frequently for the peace and exaltation of the Catholic Church and for the conversion of heretics and infidels. The peace of the Catholic Church is disturbed by heresy. To pray, therefore, for the peace of the Catholic Church means: To ask God that heretics may not sow the seed of discord and dissension in the Catholic Church. To pray for the exaltation of the Catholic Church means to ask God that the same be propagated ever more and more over the whole globe. To pray for heretics and infidels means to ask God that through the illumination of the Holy Ghost they may be led into the bosom of the Catholic Church.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken in to-day's instruction? Of the Marks of the Church.

2. What is understood by a mark? By a mark is understood a characteristic or quality whereby one thing is distinguished from another.

3. Of what marks have we spoken to-day? Of the four marks of the Catholic Church: 1. That she is one. 2. That she is holy. 3. That she is Catholic. 4. That she is apostolic.

4. With what intention does the Catechism mention the four marks of the Catholic Church? That we may learn to know and distinguish the true Church of Christ from non-Catholic denominations.

5. Why do these other denominations not belong to the Catholic Church? Because their doctrine and belief differs from the doctrine and belief of the Catholic Church.

6. Did not Christ found several Churches? No; Christ only founded one Church, as He taught only one faith.

7. Can you mention some of the Protestant doctrines which differ from ours? The Catholic Church says that good works are necessary for salvation; Protestants say that faith alone is sufficient for salvation.

8. What proof can you give that Christ established only one Church? Jesus said to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my Church."

9. Why is the Catholic Church one? Because she has at all times and everywhere 1. The same faith. 2. The same Sacrifice and Sacraments, and 3. One common Head.

10. Which faith has the Catholic Church at all times and in all places? The true faith taught by Christ.

11. The Catholic Church, for instance, teaches that there is one God in three Divine Persons. Where is this believed? This is believed throughout Christendom.

12. What does the Catholic Church believe of Jesus Christ? She believes that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God.

13. Has there ever been a time or a place in the Catholic Church when it was taught and believed otherwise? No; there has been neither a time nor a place when it was taught otherwise.

14. The Catholic Church teaches that after this life the good will be rewarded and the wicked punished. Where is this believed and taught? Throughout the whole Catholic Church.

15. Does unity of faith prevail amongst non-Catholic denominations? No; amongst the numerous Protestant sects there is no unity of faith.

16. How is unity of faith preserved in the Catholic Church? When a new doctrine arises it is decided upon by the infallible teaching office of the Church, so that no heresy can spread in the Catholic Church.

17. In what other particular is the Catholic Church one? In her Sacrifice and in her Sacraments.

18. What is the only Sacrifice offered to God in the whole of Christendom? The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

19. How many Sacraments are there in the Catholic Church? There are seven Sacraments.

20. Has there ever been a time when there were more or fewer Sacraments in the Catholic Church? No.

21. Lastly the Catholic Church is one in her Head. Who is the visible Head of the Catholic Church? Our Holy Father the Pope at Rome is the legitimate successor of the Apostle St. Peter.

22. In what way is disunion in faith caused amongst Protestants? By each one interpreting the Scriptures in his or her own way.

23. Which is the second mark or characteristic of the Catholic Church? She is Holy.

24. Why is the Roman Catholic Church evidently Holy? 1. Because her Founder is holy and her doctrine is holy. 2. Because she faithfully preserves and dispenses all the means of sanctification, and 3. Because there are in her at all times saints, whose holiness God confirms by miracles, and extraordinary graces.

25. Who is the Founder of the Catholic Church? Her Founder is Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of God.

26. Whence do we see or know that He is holy? Jesus said to the Jews: "Which of you can accuse me of sin?"

27. How can you prove to me that the doctrine of the Catholic Church is also holy? The Catholic Church always says that we should do good and shun evil.

28. What has Jesus instituted for those who live according to His doctrine and wish to be holy? Jesus Christ has instituted the Holy Sacraments.

29. What other name is there for the Holy Sacraments? They are also called means of sanctification.

30. Who preserves the means of sanctification established by Jesus, and dispenses them to us? The Catholic Church.

31. Are all the members of the Catholic Church saints? No; all the members of the Catholic Church do not become saints.

32. Whose fault is it if they do not all become saints? It is their own fault.

33. What comparisons did I employ to prove that the Catholic Church did not cease to be holy because all her members were not holy? If a man is deaf in one ear, blind in one eye, or has a crippled finger, he does not on that account cease to be a man; or, if a gold coin falls in the mud, it does not therefore lose its value.

34. What similitudes did Christ employ by which we can perceive that He knew beforehand that not all the members of His Church would be holy? Jesus compared His Church: 1. To a field wherein wheat and cockle grow. 2. To a net which gathers in good and bad fish, and 3. To a wedding banquet of which the worthy and the unworthy partake.

35. Which sacrament did Jesus institute to raise and restore to grace those fallen through sin? The Sacrament of Penance.

36. What do we see from all these proofs? We see that the Catholic Church is holy.

37. What is the third mark of the Church? She is universal or Catholic. 1. Because she has always existed from the time of Christ. 2. Because she is spread over the whole universe, and 3. Is constantly spreading more and more.

38. What means: the Catholic Church has always been since the time of Christ? From the time of Christ until now there has never been a time when the Catholic Church ceased to be.

39. How long has the Catholic Church existed uninterruptedly? For more than 1900 years.

40. How long will she last? Until the end of the world.

41. Why will she endure so long? Because Christ promised His Church that the powers of hell should never prevail against her.

42. What attempts have been made to destroy the Church. Many persecutions have been carried on against her.

43. Did these persecutions injure the Church? No; they did not.

44. Did not many thousands of Christians lose their lives in these persecutions? Yes; but the greater the number of martyrs the more Christians who confessed the faith.

45. What further proofs have we that the Catholic Church is universal? Because she is spread over the whole universe, and because she is spreading ever more and more.

46. Was the Catholic doctrine intended only for certain countries and peoples? No; it was intended for all nations and all peoples.

47. What are those men called who, animated by a holy zeal, travel into far countries to spread the Catholic faith? They are called missionaries.

48. Where are most of the missionaries educated and prepared for their vocation? At the Propaganda in Rome.

49. In what are the missionaries particularly instructed in this institution? In foreign languages.

50. What is the object of the congregation of missions? The object is to provide the missionaries with the necessary means that they may be enabled to undertake their long journeys.

51. What is the fourth mark of the Church? That she is apostolic.

52. Why is the Catholic Church apostolic? Because her origin and doctrine are apostolic.

53. Whence is the word apostolic derived? The word apostolic is derived from the word apostle.

54. Give me another word in place of origin? Instead of origin we can say beginning.

55. Why is the origin of the Church apostolic? Because Christ built His Church upon the apostles as a body, but particularly upon the Apostle St. Peter.

56. How did St. Paul for this reason write in his Epistle to the Ephesians? St. Paul wrote: "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles."

57. In order that these marks of the Catholic Church might not cease, what commission did Christ give to His apostles? The commission that they also should consecrate and ordain others.

58. What assistance besides did Jesus promise His Church? The assistance of the Holy Ghost.

59. Did the apostles make use of the power transmitted to them? Yes; by conferring the apostolical authority upon others.

60. Why is the doctrine of the Catholic Church Apostolic? Because the Catholic Church teaches nothing but what Jesus and His apostles taught.

61. From whom did the apostles receive their mission? From Christ Himself.

62. Now if none but the Catholic Church possesses these four marks or characteristics of a true Church of Christ, what is the consequence? That the Roman Catholic Church alone is the true Church founded by Christ.

63. As then you are by the grace of God a member of the Catholic Church, what do you owe God for this favor? I owe God the greatest gratitude.

64. In what way should you show this gratitude? By remaining always faithful to the Catholic Church.

65. What is the application? "To pray frequently for the peace and exaltation of the Catholic Church, and for the conversion of heretics and infidels."

66. What means: to pray for the peace of the Catholic Church? It means: "to ask God that heretics may not sow the seeds of dissension and of discord in the Catholic Church."

67. What means: to pray for the exaltation of the Catholic Church? It means: to ask God that the Catholic Church may be more and more propagated upon the earth.

68. What means: to pray for heretics and infidels? It means: to ask God that they may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit and return to the bosom of Mother Church.

The doctrine of the marks of the Church is especially intended to found a firm faith in every Catholic that only the Roman Catholic Church is the true Church established by Christ. The firmer this faith is founded in a Christian the less danger is there of falling away from the Catholic Church: for those only fall away from the Catholic Church who do not know her worth and her privileges. Pray, therefore, for the fidelity and steadfastness of those who already belong to the Catholic Church.

XXXIV.

On the Aim and Purpose of the Church.

Dear Children:—In the course of instruction we arrive to-day at the doctrine of the Purpose of the Church. When we ask for the Purpose of the Church we mean by that, with what intention and to what end has Christ established His Church.

The Catechism asks: "For what purpose has Christ established the Church?"

Christ has established the Church that by her He might lead all men to eternal salvation.

This fact shows how great a love Jesus Christ has toward us men. He did not deem it sufficient to die the death of atonement upon the cross, but also He wished to give to the future generations the possibility of going to Him in heaven. The Catechism states distinctly that the Church founded by Christ is to make all men blessed. This disposes of the false doctrine that certain human beings are elected for heaven while others are destined for hell. As mentioned before, such doctrine is contrary to divine justice. God wills that through His Church all human beings should obtain salvation, and that the fruits and graces of the death of atonement of Jesus Christ should be a benefit to all men unto the end of the world. The Church was to prevent for all time the separation of mankind from God. By the establishment of the Church Jesus Christ wished to unite all mankind into one holy body, of which He was the head.

What has Jesus provided so that the Church may be enabled to serve this purpose?

He has entrusted to His Church His doctrines, the means of His grace and power, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost.

Christ then has given His Church these things for obtaining the object of her establishment, namely:

1. His doctrine;
2. His means of grace;
3. His power;
4. The assistance of the Holy Ghost.

I. The doctrine of Jesus shows us the way to heaven, it teaches us what good we must do and what evil we must avoid to obtain

eternal salvation. To assist our human weakness and to help us and strengthen us to love and do the good, and to hate and avoid the evil, Jesus has:

II. Transmitted to His Church the means of grace established by Him, so that every one who thirsteth for the divine grace may be satisfied.

III. To insure to His Church eternal duration, Jesus has endowed her with His powers, particularly with the power of appointing Bishops as legitimate successors of the apostles.

IV. Christ has furthermore given to His Church the special assistance of the Holy Ghost, so that she might perpetually preserve the divine doctrine uncorrupted, rightly administer the means of grace, and exercise her powers for the salvation of mankind.

Yet there might arise the doubt whether the doctrines given to us by Jesus have been preserved pure and uncorrupted through these many centuries, and the question will arise, by whom was this done?

The Catechism answers:

"By the Infallible Teaching Body of the Church." Infallible is he who can not fail. The Church is infallible in her doctrines because in her teaching she can not fail. This infallibility is not human, but is the work of the Holy Ghost, who enlightens and governs the Church. By the decisions of this teaching body there are kept away from the Catholic Church all doctrines which are contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles.

Who composes this infallible teaching body?

The Pope and the Bishops united with him. The Pope is the legitimate successor of the Apostle St. Peter, and the Bishops are the legitimate successors of the other apostles. In the same way as the apostles taught under the leadership of St. Peter, so do the Bishops under the leadership of the Pope, and so do they form with him the infallible teaching body of the Church.

If there is a teaching Church, there must also be a Church to be taught which is subject to the teaching Church. To this learning Church belong the laymen. It is their duty to submit to the edicts of the infallible Church.

Why is the teaching Church called infallible? Because, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, she is secured against erring both in matters of faith and of morals.

As I told you before, the infallibility of the Church is not the work of man, but the action of the Holy Ghost, who leads, en-

lightens, and governs the Church. The Church as an infallible teaching body in her edicts is only an organ, an instrument, of the Holy Ghost.

This infallibility extends to matters of faith and morals, i. e., the Catholic Church by virtue of her infallibility can never assert a doctrine of faith or morals which is contrary to the divine teachings of Jesus Christ.

Who assures us that the teaching Church can not err?

Christ Himself, who has given us the threefold promise, that

1. He will be with her all days, even to the consummation of the world.

2. That the Spirit of Truth shall abide with her forever, and

3. That the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.

Firstly: Jesus Christ has given to His Church the promise that He Himself will remain with the teaching office all days unto the end of the world. Therefore Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the eternal truth, is in His Church. If then God can not fail, the Church can not fail, because God is with her.

Secondly: Jesus Christ has given the promise that the spirit of truth shall be with the teaching office unto all eternity. The apostles have confessed to this guidance of the Church by the Holy Ghost in the utterance: "It has pleased the Holy Ghost and us not to put any further burden upon you," and in the council of the Church the Bishops of the Church call themselves "assembled in the Holy Spirit," which means that they are led and directed by the Holy Ghost.

Thirdly: Jesus has given His Church the promise that the powers of hell shall not prevail against her. This promise has been undoubtedly confirmed by the existence of the Church for now over 1900 years, and has been especially proved by her continuance through the early persecutions.

Therefore, St. Paul the apostle calls the Church with perfect right, "A pillar and foundation of truth."

What must we do, then, when any disputes arise in matters of faith? We must abide by the decisions of the teaching body of the Church. As the weak are led by the strong, as the child is led by its mother, so must the faithful accept with confidence the edicts of the teaching body of the Church in the full conviction that this teaching body is assisted by the Holy Ghost, and can speak nothing but the truth.

The most learned men, such as Gregory the Great, submitted themselves to the decisions of the Church.

What else are we bound to do to merit eternal salvation?

To merit salvation we are bound to be ever obedient children of the Catholic Church, i. e., to believe in her doctrines, to make use of her means of grace and to obey her commandments.

The Church is our spiritual mother, for she has given us a new birth in baptism, and through the Holy Ghost made us the children of God. She nourishes us spiritually with the true bread of heaven, she gives us strength through the living source of the Holy Sacraments, and makes us partakers of the merits of Jesus Christ. By her rules of conduct she brings us up in the fear of the Lord, accompanies us through life and gives us consolation at the hour of death. Therefore, it is our duty to believe her teachings, keep her commandments, and use her means of her grace. Just as a child should obey its natural parents, so should we obey our spiritual mother, the Church; and just as God has promised to good children His special blessing, so will this special blessing be given to those who honor their spiritual mother, the Church.

Who teaches us this duty?

Jesus Christ Himself, with the words: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." Every one, therefore, who does not submit to the teachings of faith and morals of the Church can have no part in her prayers and treasures of grace and no part in God. As Jesus Christ says: "He that believeth not, shall be condemned." What do we profess by the words: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church?" We profess to believe that Jesus Christ has established an infallible Church, which we must hear and obey without reserve if we would obtain eternal salvation, and that this is no other than the Roman Catholic Church.

It is in the Catholic Church that there is truth, for the Catholic Church alone has preserved in its purity and without alteration the divine teachings as they were revealed by Jesus Christ. The Catholic Church represents upon earth the person of Christ. As Jesus says, that he who believes in Him shall be saved, so can those only be saved who listen to the Church, believe in her teachings, keep her commandments, and make use of her means of grace.

The application of this is: "Honor and love the Church like your mother, submit humbly to all her laws and orders, for he who does

not want to have the Church for his mother, can not have God for his father."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What have we spoken of to-day? Of the purpose of the Church.

2. What do we understand by the purpose of the Church? We mean by that, with what intention and to what end Christ has established His Church.

3. For what end has Christ established the Church? Christ has established the Church that by her He might lead all men to eternal salvation.

4. Who is to be led by the Church to eternal salvation? All men are to be led by the Church to eternal salvation.

5. To what are all men to be led by the Church? To eternal salvation.

6. What has Jesus proved by the fact that the Church founded by Him was to lead all men to salvation? Jesus has proved by this His great love for man.

7. To what did Jesus Christ wish to unite all men by the establishment of His Church? He wished to unite them to one Holy Body.

8. Who was to be the head of this body? Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of God.

9. What has Jesus provided so that the Church may be enabled to serve this purpose? He has given her the assistance of the Holy Ghost.

10. To what purpose has Christ given His teachings to the Church? The teachings of Christ tell us what is the will of God, what we must believe, what good we must do, and what evil avoid.

11. But as we are too weak of ourselves to fulfil the Gospel of Christ, what more has Christ entrusted to His Church? He has entrusted to her His means of grace.

12. What are these means of grace? The Holy Sacraments.

13. Who can strengthen himself in good works by the Holy Sacraments? Every Christian can strengthen himself in good works by the Holy Sacraments.

14. With what has Jesus endowed His Church so as to give her everlasting duration? He has endowed the Church with His own power.

15. Which power especially? Especially the power to appoint and consecrate bishops as the successors of the apostles.

16. What else has Christ given to His Church? The assistance of the Holy Ghost.

17. For what purpose has Christ given to the Church the assistance of the Holy Ghost? That she may preserve the divine doctrine pure and uncorrupted, administer rightly the means of grace, and exercise her powers for the salvation of mankind.

18. How should the doctrine of Christ be kept? It should be kept pure and uncorrupted.

19. When is it kept pure and uncorrupted? When it remains as it originally was; when nothing is added thereto nor taken therefrom, nor anything altered.

20. By whom is the divine doctrine kept pure and uncorrupted? By the infallible teaching body of the Church.

21. When can you say of a person that he is infallible? When a person can neither err nor fail you call him infallible.

22. What do we mean when we say that the teaching body of the Church is infallible? That it can not err in doctrines of faith and morals.

23. Who forms this infallible teaching body? The Pope and the bishops of the Catholic Church united with him.

24. Why especially these? Because they are the rightful successors of the apostles.

25. Who is subject to the teaching body of the Church? Those who must learn, for instance, the laity.

26. What duty has the learning Church toward the teaching Church? It has the duty of submitting to the edicts of the teaching body.

27. Why is this teaching body declared infallible? Because on account of the assistance of the Holy Ghost it can not err in matters of faith and morals.

28. Is then the infallibility of the Church the work of man or the work of God? It is the work of God the Holy Ghost.

29. When and on what occasions does the infallibility of the Church prove itself? When erroneous doctrines arise and are decided by the general councils of the Church.

30. What are the decisions of such general councils of the Church? They are infallible.

31. From whom have we the assurance that the teaching body of the Church is infallible? From Jesus Christ Himself, who has given the threefold promise that (a) He will be with her all days, even to the consummation of the world. (b) That the spirit of truth shall abide with her forever. (c) That the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.

32. Who then is always with the Church? Jesus Christ Himself and the Holy Ghost.

33. If then Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are and remain with the Church, can she err? No; she can not err.

34. How have the apostles declared that in their decisions they are led by the Holy Ghost? Through the saying of the Bible: "It has pleased the Holy Ghost and us not to put any further burden upon you."

35. How do the bishops assembled in council call themselves? They call themselves "assembled in the Holy Ghost."

36. They confess, therefore, that they stand under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. How has this threefold promise of Jesus Christ proved itself? By the existence for now over 1900 years of the Catholic Church.

37. What, for this reason, was the Church called by St. Paul? It was called a pillar and foundation of truth.

38. What must we do then when there arises a dispute in matters of faith? We must abide by the decision of the teaching body of the Church.

39. When you are afraid and in danger, where do you go for protection? To my parents.

40. Why? Because I believe that they will protect me.

41. From whom does a weak person generally seek aid and protection? From a stronger one.

42. If then by a newly arising false doctrine danger is threatening our faith, to whom should we go for advice, aid, and protection? To the infallible teaching body of the Church.

43. What will it protect us from? It will protect us from error.

44. What is it our duty to do to obtain salvation? It is our duty to be at all times obedient children of the Catholic Church, i. e., to believe in her teachings, to use her means of grace, and to keep her commandments.

45. What should be our relation to the Church? The relation of a child.

46. Why should it be that of a child? Because the Church is our mother.

47. What does every mother possess for her child? A mother has the greatest love for her child.

48. Has the Church also a great love for us? Yes; the Church has a great love for us.

49. What did the Church do for your salvation immediately after your birth? I was baptized.

50. When a man sins and repents of his sins, what does the Church do in God's name? She forgives the sinner his sins.

51. When you are a little older what sacrament will you then receive? The Holy Eucharist.

52. When two persons are united in matrimony what sacrament do they receive? The Sacrament of Matrimony.

53. When a person is dangerously ill which sacrament does the Church administer to him? The Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

54. When a person dies how does the Church show her love for him or her? She buries them and prays for them.

55. You see then that the Catholic Church really loves her children in the highest degree. It is therefore only right and just when the children love their mother, revere and obey her. A child who does not do this is a bad child, and you know that bad children draw God's curse down upon them. Be therefore always obedient to the Catholic Church as to your spiritual mother, and then God's blessing will not be wanting to you. Who teaches us this obligation? Jesus Christ Himself with the words: If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.

56. If anybody does not submit to Mother Church what consequences will he have to suffer? He will exclude himself from the Catholic Church.

57. What consequences will this exclusion have? He will have no part or share in the prayers and means of grace of the Church.

58. What do we confess by the words: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church?" We confess that Christ has established an infallible Church, which we must adhere to and obey without reserve, and that this is no other than the Roman Catholic Church.

59. Is, then, the Church a human institution? No; it is a divine institution.

60. What obligation arises therefrom? The obligation that we must believe and obey her without reserve.

61. What obligation has he who is born in the Catholic Church? He must remain true to her.

62. What is opposed to this adherence to the Church? Apostasy.

63. What are men to be compared with who fall away from the Church? With the withered saplings which are cut from the vine.

64. What is the application? Honor and love your Church like your mother, and submit humbly to her laws and orders, for he who will not have the Church for his mother can not have God for his father. The Church has in her motherly love only one care, that is, to give man salvation through his virtue. The Church's only concern is to make her children happy, and he who wants to make me happy is my friend, whom I esteem, revere, and love, to whom I am attached and grateful. But the Church is more than our friend; she is our mother. Therefore our love for her should be a filial love and we should prove our love for her by a willing and cheerful obedience. And if we always give to our Mother Church honor, love, and obedience, we will with her help enter into eternal life.

XXXV.

On the Propagation and Preservation of the Church.

Dear Children:—You have already heard that Jesus established His Church for all men and for all times. As she is intended for all men, she had to spread herself from Judea to the other countries of the earth, and as she is destined for all times, she must preserve herself from one age to another until the end of the world. The instruction of to-day will treat of this. It shows us how the Church is spread over the whole universe, and in what a miraculous manner she is preserved by God.

After the apostles had received the Holy Ghost upon the feast of Pentecost they went forth into the world and preached the Gospel to all mankind. And as their mission was a divine one and their work a divine work, they also had most abundant success.

St. Peter alone by his preaching converted 8,000 persons to Christianity. As in a fertile field the seed sown soon comes up and grows, and as a sweet odor permeates quickly all through a house, with the same remarkable rapidity did Christianity spread over the whole earth.

Already at the end of the second century one-half of the immense Roman Empire was Christian: Britain, Spain, Africa, Egypt, Arabia, India, Asia Minor, Germany, Greece, Italy, and other countries had their Bishops.

If this fact is remarkable in itself, it is rendered still more so from the fact that the Gospel of Jesus was opposed to the spirit of the world. It exacted of its confessors humility, self-denial, mortification of the flesh, mastery over sensual desires and passions, temperance, chastity, contempt of worldly goods, etc., whilst paganism permitted just the reverse. It can not be denied, therefore, that this success could not come from men, but from God alone. Why could not this success have come from men? Because the Christian Church spread itself in an incredibly short time over the whole universe, while men themselves, the Jews as well as pagans, kings and emperors, did their utmost to prevent her propagation.

The oppression and persecution of the Christian Church began in the times of the apostles, and continued for many centuries.

What did men do to prevent the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus?

Out of hatred of the Christian doctrine which condemned their vices, they persecuted and tortured the Christians for three centuries in the most cruel manner.

The apostles were not only thrown into prison, they were tortured and put to death. The first martyr was St. Stephen, who was stoned to death. James the Greater was beheaded; James the Less was thrown from the Temple and killed. The Roman Emperor Nero was a terrible tyrant toward Christians. It was in his reign that St. Peter was crucified and St. Paul beheaded. So as to have an excuse for his persecution, he himself caused Rome to be set on fire, and then he put the blame upon the Christians. He tortured the Christians in such a manner that crucifixion and beheading were the least cruel of martyrdoms. He caused the Christians to be sewn up in the skins of animals, chased by dogs, finally covered with pitch and set on fire, etc. Also under the Emperor Domitian the blood of the Christians flowed in streams. During this time St. John was cast into boiling oil; but, his life being preserved, he was exiled to the island of Patmos.

No less horrible was the persecution of Christians under the Emperors Adrian, Anthony, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian. Twenty-eight Popes alone endured martyrdom under the persecutions of the Roman emperors, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of Christian martyrs who shed their blood for Jesus.

This condition of the most frightful persecution of the Christians lasted for 300 years. But every drop of blood of the martyrs was a seed always producing more Christians.

If Christianity had been man's work it would certainly have yielded before the blind fury of its enemies. But the doctrine of Jesus took root deeper and deeper, and spread itself further and further.

God had shown sufficiently that the foundation of the Church was His work, and that all the powers of the earth could not prevail against her. Now He granted her peace.

Who gave the Church peace after 300 years?

The Emperor Constantine the Great finally gave peace to the Church.

He reigned from the year 306 until the year 337.

How did he give peace to the Church?

He took the Christians and their Bishops under his protection, allowed the Christians the free practice of their religion, had many Christian churches built, gave orders that no more evildoers were to be crucified, because Christ had died upon the cross for mankind, he abolished the bloody gladiatorial games, and made the Lord's day, Sunday, a feast-day for the people.

His good example moved thousands of pagans to be baptized and converted to the Divine Doctrine, and soon the temples of the pagan idols stood empty and forsaken. In a short while paganism was completely conquered in the Roman kingdom, and the Christian religion reigned forevermore.

How was Constantine moved to this?

By the miraculous appearance of a cross in the heavens with the inscription: "By this sign shalt thou conquer!"

History relates the following: In the year 306 after the birth of Christ, Constantine, a son of the Roman emperor Constantius Chlorus, who was favorably inclined toward Christians, was proclaimed emperor by his soldiers. At the same time Maxentius proclaimed himself emperor of Rome. War arose between these two emperors, the outcome of which threatened misfortune to Constantine. Thereupon he besought the true God for help and received a sign of divine assistance. He and his army saw in the heavens a brilliant cross with the inscription, "By this sign shalt thou conquer." Constantine had a flag made according to this sign and caused it to be carried before him in the battle. Courageously he attacked the superior enemy and defeated him. From that moment Constantine was the champion and protector of Christianity.

In uninterrupted succession until our day 264 Popes have guided the bark of Peter through the most violent storms of the period with courage and success. Great kingdoms have come and gone, people have stepped upon the stage of history and disappeared again, the Church of Christ alone stands immovably firm like a lighthouse amidst the rushing waters of the sea unharmed, and always gleaming with the same brilliancy to enlighten, protect and bless humanity.

Has the Church had no more enemies to combat since the time of Constantine?

The Church has always had many and powerful enemies, but they never could and never will overpower her.

These prophecies of Jesus are continually being fulfilled in the Church: "As they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." "The gates of hell will never prevail against you" (the Church)

Why can the Church never be overcome?

Because Christ has promised that it shall not be. The Church resembles a rock in the sea. No matter how the waves dash against it, they can never wear away the rock. One wave after another dashes against it, but one after the other breaks itself upon the rock and is dissolved in foam and spray.

St. Ambrose feelingly and beautifully calls the Church a ship which can never suffer shipwreck, for at her mast stands Christ, at her prow is seated God the Father, and she is steered by the Holy Ghost.

Who have been the most dangerous enemies of the Church since Constantine?

The heretics who separated themselves from the Catholic Church and formed their own communities or sects.

In the same way as the sicknesses of mankind are twofold, interior and exterior, so also the Church has a twofold enemy, interior and exterior. The interior enemy, which like a malady attacks the intestines of the Church, are the heretics, who, blinded by pride, will not submit themselves to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In the place of truth they set up error and lies, lead others into error, and, like the revolutionists in the public life of the state, they seek to bring disunion and confusion into the Church. Jesus Christ said: "There will arise many false prophets (teachers), and they will seduce many." "Take heed that no one seduce you."

Why does God permit sects to arise?

1. In order that by the falling away the Church may be purified of rotten and infectious members. Gold has to be purified in the fire from the dross which surrounds it, and wheat has to be separated from the chaff.

2. So that the Catholic doctrine may be strengthened anew and more clearly understood. The different sects may be compared to a thunderstorm. In some places it causes damage, but it always purifies the air and promotes by fertilizing rains the growth of plants. As God in His infinite wisdom knows how to turn even wickedness itself into good, so also apostasy from the Catholic Church serves for her good.

When, for instance, heretics arose denying the Divinity of Jesus

Christ, then the Church at the councils of Nice and Constantinople explained the second article of the creed more clearly and completely.

So also the council of Trent in opposition to the heresies of the so-called Reformers decided plainly and decisively upon tradition, upon the number of sacraments, upon original sin and justification, upon the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, upon purgatory, upon the saints and the veneration of relics, and upon the power of indulgences.

How is God wont to replace apostasy from the Church?

He replaces the apostasy of degenerate Christians by the conversion of heathen people who make better use of the gift of faith. While during the period of the Reformation thousands of persons in Germany and other European countries accepted Luther's doctrines, the Spanish and Portuguese missionaries converted millions of Indians in the newly discovered continent of America. St. Francis Xavier did the same in India and Japan. Thus the Church has always her consolation, and what she loses in one place she gains in another.

How is the doctrine of the Church confirmed and made clearer?

Principally by the decisions of the General Councils, or Church assemblies, which, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, explain the old Catholic doctrines infallibly, confirm them, and condemn the new heresies. A Council is an assembly of Bishops and other rulers of the Church under the presidency of the Pope for the purpose of deciding upon existing heresies, particularly in things pertaining to faith and morals, to make laws upon Church matters and customs. We believe that the decisions of these Councils are infallible, because the Teaching office is under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who is infallible. The following is a list of General Councils:

1.	The Council of the Apostles at Jerusalem.		
2.	" "	at Nice in the year	325
3.	" "	" Constantinople in the year	381
4.	" "	" Ephesus " "	431
5.	" "	" Chalcedony " "	451
6.	" "	" Constantinople " "	553
7.	" "	" Constantinople " "	680
8.	" "	" Nice " "	787
9.	" "	" Constantinople " "	869
10.	First "	" Rome " "	1123
11.	Second "	" Rome " "	1139

12. Third Council at	Rome	in the year	1179
13. Fourth "	" Rome	" "	1215
14. First "	" Lyons	" "	1245
15. Second "	" Lyons	" "	1274
16. The "	" Vienna	" "	1311
17. " "	" Constance	in the years	1414–1418
18. " "	" Florence	in the year	1439
19. " "	" Trent	in the years	1545–1563
20. " "	" Vatican	in the year	1869

A steadfast faith and a firm belief are expected of us. A man stands firmly, only an infant totters from side to side. A Christian who is well instructed in his holy religion understands the Divinity of Christianity, and therefore is faithful to the same and permits nothing to seduce him to apostasy. Only those Christians who are poorly instructed in Christianity float about upon the waters like a ship without a rudder or steersman, they are blown hither and thither, like a reed driven by the wind.

Application: Thank God fervently that you are a child of the Catholic Church, upon which God's blessing rests so evidently. Honor her by a truly Christian manner of living, otherwise it will avail you nothing to belong to her.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the propagation and preservation of the Church.

2. For whom did Christ establish His Church? For all the people of the whole world.

3. How long is the Church of Christ to last? Until the end of the world.

4. Who began to spread the doctrine of Jesus over the whole world? The apostles.

5. In what way? They went into all parts of the earth and preached the Word of God.

6. What was the result of the apostles' preaching? It was abundantly successful—a proof that it did not come from men but from God.

7. Which of the apostles preached at Jerusalem? The Apostle St. Peter, where he converted eight thousand persons.

8. What comparisons did I employ concerning the propagation of the Divine Word? As in a fertile field the good seed sown soon comes up and flourishes, and as a sweet odor permeates through a house, so also did Christianity spread itself quickly over the whole earth.

9. Through what circumstance is the spread of Christianity still more wonderful? Because the Gospel of Jesus is opposed to paganism and the spirit of the world.

10. What does Christianity ask of its followers? It asks: humility, self-denial, mortification, temperance, chastity, contempt of worldly goods.

11. When did the persecutions and oppression of the Christians begin? At the time of the apostles.

12. And how long did they continue? For three hundred years.

13. What was done to the apostles? They were thrown into prison and tortured.

14. Who was the first martyr? St. Stephen, who was stoned to death.

15. What happened to St. James the Greater? He was beheaded.

16. What befell St. James the Lesser? He was hurled from the Temple and killed.

17. What was done to St. John? He was put into a vessel filled with boiling oil, and as this did not injure him, he was exiled to the island of Patmos.

18. Who was the greatest tyrant to the Christians? The Roman Emperor Nero.

19. What did he do so as to have an excuse for his persecutions? He caused the city of Rome to be set on fire, and then said that the Christians had done it.

20. How many Popes died a martyr's death? Twenty-eight.

21. Where were the most violent persecutions of the Christians? In the city of Rome.

22. What may be truly said of the effect of these persecutions upon the Church? "That the blood of martyrs was the seed of new Christians."

23. What did this prove? That the establishment of the Christian Church was not human work, but a work of God.

24. What did God wish to show mankind still further? That no power upon earth could do anything against Christianity.

25. Through whom did God at last give peace to the Church? Through the Emperor Constantine the Great.

(The pupils will now relate what they know of the conversion, etc., of Emperor Constantine.)

26. How long has the Catholic Church been in existence? For more than nineteen hundred years.

27. The Christian reckoning of time gives us an exact explanation on this point, for whilst the Jews count their years from the creation of the world, the Christians count theirs from the birth of Christ, and the date of the year about which we are writing indicates how long the Catholic Church has already existed. Can you tell me how many Popes have reigned during these nineteen hundred years? Two hundred and sixty-four.

28. What has happened during this time to great states and kingdoms? They have disappeared.

29. What, however, has happened to the Church of Christ? She remains immovably firm.

30. To what may she be compared? To a rock in the sea.

31. Has the Church had no enemies to combat since the persecution of the Christians? The Church has always had many powerful enemies, but she never can and never will be overpowered by them.

32. To what does St. Ambrose compare the Church? To a ship that can never suffer shipwreck.

33. Which were and remain the most dangerous enemies of the Church? The most dangerous enemies were the heretics who tore themselves away from the Catholic Church and formed their own sects.

34. Why are they called sects? Because they are cut off from the true Church like a branch from the vine.

35. Did Christ foretell that there would be sects? Yes; Christ and His apostles foretold it plainly and repeatedly.

36. Can you give me the Scripture text for this? Jesus said: "There will arise false Prophets (teachers) amongst you, and they will seduce many. Take heed that no one seduce you."

37. Why does God permit sects to arise? God permits it, first, so that through apostasy the Church may be purified of its corrupt and wicked members.

38. Why does God further permit sects to arise? So that the Catholic doctrine may be confirmed anew, and understood better.

39. How is apostasy from the Catholic Church compensated for? By the conversion of the heathen, who make a better use of the grace of faith.

40. How is the doctrine of the Church strengthened and better understood? Principally by the decisions of the general councils or Church assemblies, which enlightened by the Holy Spirit, explain infallibly the old Catholic doctrines, and confirm them, and condemn the new heresies.

41. What is a council? An assembly of bishops and other rulers of the Church under the presidency of the Pope, for the purpose of deciding matters of faith and morals, then to form resolutions upon ecclesiastical arrangements and customs.

42. What occasioned the Council of Trent? The heretical teachings of the reformers, Luther and Calvin.

43. What did the Council of Trent do? It unanimously condemned the injurious heresies and made many wholesome ordinances.

44. Can you name some of these ordinances? 1. It determined which Books were to be accepted as belonging to Holy Scripture. 2. It defined more exactly the doctrine of original sin. 3. It treated of the doctrine of the holy sacraments, particularly of the Sacrament of Penance, and of the Holy Eucharist, of Marriage, of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, of Purgatory, of the veneration of Saints and relics, and of Indulgences.

45. What arrangements did Christ make in order that we might not be without counsel when heresies arise? Jesus Christ instituted pastors and teachers.

46. What are these pastors and teachers called collectively? The ecclesiastical teaching office.

47. What purpose, what end has this teaching office? It is intended to keep the Catholic doctrine pure and unadulterated.

48. How does it do this? By the assistance of the Holy Ghost.

49. What would take place if this teaching office of the Church were not there? We should not be able to distinguish truth from error in the new doctrines which arose.

50. What should we resemble under these conditions? A waving reed blown about by the wind.

51. What does he resemble who is firmly attached to his Church? An oak, which is firmly rooted in the earth.

52. What does this mean? That he is firm in his faith.

53. Which Christians are the first to fall away from their holy religion? Those who are poorly instructed in their faith.

54. Why is this the case? Because they do not understand the divinity of Christianity.

55. What duty does this impose upon us? That we should be thoroughly instructed in the Christian doctrine.

56. What is the application? To thank God fervently that you are a child of the Catholic Church, upon which God's blessing rests so unmistakably. But do her honor by a truly Christian way of living, otherwise it will not avail you anything to belong to her.

XXXVI.

The Communion of Saints.

Dear Children:—In the explanation of the Catechism we come to-day to the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. A communion or community is a society of persons who pursue the same purpose, have one common head, and have claim to a common property or wealth. A person may depart into another country: still he does not cease on that account to be a member of his community, nor does he forfeit his privileges. To-day, then, we will speak of the Communion of Saints. We understand thereby:

1. The saints in heaven.
2. The orthodox Christians upon earth.
3. The souls in purgatory.

The saints in heaven are called the Church triumphant, the members of the church upon earth the Church militant, and the souls in purgatory the Church suffering. The Catechism asks: Are only the faithful on earth united as one church?

No; with the faithful on earth are also spiritually united the saints in heaven and the souls in purgatory.

This union and communion is called a spiritual one in contrast to the visible union of the faithful upon earth, because the saints in heaven and the souls in purgatory are spirits, and therefore there exists between them only a spiritual communion. The apostle St. Paul referred to this threefold spiritual communion when he said: "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those in heaven, upon earth, and under the earth."

In what does this spiritual union consist? This spiritual union consists in this: that all are members of one body, whose head is Christ Jesus, and that therefore the different members participate

in one another's spiritual benefits. This spiritual union is the living testimony of the Oneness of the Catholic Church, for it not only embraces the life here, but the life hereafter. The spiritual benefits of which there is question here are the Holy Sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the prayers of the Church, and the good works of the faithful. St. Paul compares the Church to a body in these words: "As in one body we have many members, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom. xii. 4, 5). As the food which we take nourishes not simply one single member of the human body, but all of them, so also the spiritual benefits go to the common wealth of the whole Church. All members partake thereof.

What is this spiritual union called?

The Communion of Saints.

Why are all members of this communion called saints, when there are so many Christians who live unworthily, and when the souls in purgatory, too, have not yet attained perfect sanctity?

Because all are called to sanctity, and have been sanctified by Baptism; and many of them have indeed arrived at perfect sanctity. If, then, a Christian loses his sanctity, he himself is to blame, not the Church.

With perfect right then may the Church of Christ be called the Communion of Saints.

What does this communion with the saints in heaven afford us—the members of the church militant?

We profit by their merits and by their intercession with God.

To the saints in heaven the grave is not a wall of separation in their love for us. As a man in a far country remembers his family at home, although the wide ocean separates him from them, so also the love of the saints for their brethren of the Church militant does not die. By applying to us the merits attained by the practice of good works upon earth and by their intercession with God they can do a great deal for us. As proof that the saints in heaven do not forget us, but that they are continually united with us is given in the words of Jesus, that "in heaven there is great joy over one sinner doing penance." As then the saints in heaven think so lovingly of us it is right and just that we should venerate them devoutly and often invoke their intercession. In the same manner as the saints in heaven pray for mankind upon earth, so do they also pray for the souls in purgatory, for they also belong to

the great Communion of Saints. The Church confirms this belief by prayers in which she asks God that He may through the intercession of the saints not only forgive the sins of the living but also those of the dead.

What benefit do the souls in purgatory receive from our communion with them?

We may come to the assistance of these suffering brethren by prayers, alms, and other good works, especially by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in order that their pains be mitigated and shortened.

As the blessed in heaven remember their struggling brethren upon earth and the souls in purgatory, so also should we with love and sympathy remember the poor souls, and give practical proof of this love by helping them (a) by prayer, (b) by offerings, especially of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, (c) by other good works, by indulgences, etc., the merits of which we can apply to the poor souls. In the Old Testament Judas Machabeus sent ten thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem in order that sacrifice might be offered for the souls of the dead. Holy Scripture says: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be released from their sins."

As a proof that the souls of the departed in purgatory still belong to the Communion of Saints, the Catholic Church offers special prayers in commemoration of the souls in purgatory the day after the Feast of All Saints. When at the Feast of All Saints in the evening the vespers for the dead are chanted, the whole communion of saints in heaven, earth and purgatory may be said to be united in prayer.

What profit do we derive from our communion with the faithful on earth?

We participate, especially when in the state of grace, in all the masses, prayers, and good works of the living members of the Catholic Church, and, in general, in all her spiritual goods.

An illustration of this may be found in the human body; one member supports the other. The feet bear the other members, the hands work, the mouth speaks, the ears hear, the eyes see, the lungs breathe, and the heart beats for all other members. So also we, as members of a spiritual body, are to love, help, and support one another, especially in all those things which serve to promote virtue and sanctity. The Catechism says: "Whatever of good or what-

ever holy is done by one, gives benefit to all, and is made profitable to them through charity which is not self-seeking." The doctrine of the Communion of Saints is for us at once joyful and consoling. We are not only united to the living, but also to the blessed in heaven. The latter remain our brethren, and they profit of their closer relations with God to intercede for us. And if we should depart this life not entirely justified, yet without grievous sin, we may confidently hope that the intercession of the triumphant and militant Church may bring us the sooner to God.

The doctrine of the Communion of Saints should also warn us never to underestimate nor offend any member of the Communion of Saints.

Application: Pray daily for your fellow Christians who pursue the same end as you, who have the same Head and the same benefits out of which all the members of the community profit in common.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. Of what have we spoken to-day? Of the Communion of Saints.

2. Who belong to this communion? 1. The Saints in heaven; 2. The faithful upon earth, and 3. The souls in purgatory.

3. Of what is this Communion of Saints therefore constituted? Of, 1. The Church Triumphant; 2. The Church Militant; 3. The Church Suffering.

4. What means triumph? To triumph means to rejoice, to be glad at a victory won.

5. Who then triumphs and rejoices in the Church and belongs to the Church Triumphant? The blessed in heaven.

6. Why do they triumph and rejoice? Because they have won the victory over sin and the devil and are permitted to behold God.

7. Who belong to the Church Militant? To the Church Militant belong the faithful upon earth.

8. With what do they militate and combat? With their evil desires, with sin, with the devil, with wicked persons and seducers to sin.

9. Who belongs to the Church Suffering? The souls in purgatory.

10. For what have they to suffer, to do penance? For the lesser sins committed by them during life and not yet atoned for; also for the grievous sins forgiven but not sufficiently expiated before death.

11. Where do souls go after having done penance for their sins in purgatory? They go to heaven.

12. To what do they belong then? To the Church Triumphant.

13. What do the members of the triumphant, militant, and suffering bodies of the Church form together? They form a spiritual union.

14. Why is it called a spiritual union? Because it is an invisible one which can not be perceived with our senses.

15. Are then the faithful upon earth united only to one another? No; the faithful upon earth are also united to the blessed in heaven, and to the souls in purgatory.

16. In what does this spiritual union consist? It consists therein that all are members of one body, of which Christ is the Head, and that the spiritual benefits of one member are participated in by the others.

17. To what therefore has the Church been compared? To a body, of which Christ is the Head.

18. In what passage of Scripture has St. Paul mentioned this spiritual union? In the text: "At the name of Jesus all shall bow the knee, those who are in heaven, upon earth, and under the earth."

19. What advantage is gained by this spiritual union? The advantage that in the spiritual benefits of one member all others participate.

20. Name these spiritual benefits. 1. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; 2. The prayers of the Church; 3. The Holy Sacraments, and 4. All other good works.

21. By what comparison did I explain this to you? As the food and drink of which we partake not only nourishes one single part but all parts of our body, so also do in this spiritual body the spiritual benefits extend to all its members.

22. What do we call this spiritual union? The Communion of Saints.

23. How do you explain the words Communion of Saints when so many of the Christians upon earth are imperfect, and the souls in purgatory not yet holy? Because: 1. They all are called to sanctity; 2. Because they all have been sanctified by Baptism, and 3. Because many members of this communion have arrived at perfect sanctity.

24. What means all are called to sanctity? It means that all men are commanded to become holy.

25. By whom are they commanded? By God.

26. What does it mean: All Christians are sanctified by holy Baptism? It means that through Baptism everything unholy is taken away from them.

27. Were then all Christians actually saints at one time? Yes; all Christians were at one time saints.

28. When were they saints? In the state of Baptismal innocence.

29. If then they are no longer in a state of sanctity, whose fault is it? It is their own fault.

30. How has it been proved that we may be holy in the Catholic Church if we want to be? By the saints now in heaven.

31. What, therefore, may we justly call the Catholic Church? The Communion of Saints.

32. What benefits do we obtain from the Communion with the Saints in heaven? We partake of their merits and are assisted through their intercession with God.

33. Do the saints in heaven forget the faithful upon earth and the poor souls in purgatory? No; they will never forget them.

34. How is this? Because the saints love us and the poor souls, and will never cease to do so.

35. What illustration did I make use of so that you might understand this more easily? When a member of the family leaves home and lives in a far country beyond the seas, he does not forget the others of his family, but thinks of them lovingly.

36. Now if this man in a far country would be well-to-do, and his family poor and in want, what would he do? He would help them.

37. In what way do the saints in heaven help us? They help us: 1. By their merits; 2. By their intercession.

38. By what text of Holy Writ can you prove to me that the saints in heaven do not forget us? Jesus said: There is joy in heaven over one sinner who does penance.

39. If then the saints think so kindly of us what must we do on our part? We must venerate the saints devoutly and invoke their intercession.

40. Do the saints pray only for us? No; they pray also for the souls in purgatory.

41. How can you prove this to me? The Church prays to God that through the intercession of the Saints He may grant pardon of sins to the living and the dead.

42. What benefit do the souls in purgatory receive from our communion with them? They are assisted by our prayers, alms and other good works, especially by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

43. What did Judas Machabeus do in the old Law for the poor souls? He sent ten thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem in order that a sacrifice might be offered for the sins of the dead.

44. What says Holy Writ of the assistance which we should give the dead? Holy Writ says: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."

45. How does the Catholic Church profess her belief in the communion with the poor souls in purgatory? By establishing All Souls' Day.

46. What takes place upon All Souls' Day? The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and prayers are offered up especially on this day for the poor souls.

47. What profit do we derive from the communion with the faithful on earth? We participate in all the Masses, prayers, and good works of the Catholic Church, in all her spiritual benefits.

48. What example did I employ? The example of the human body, in which one member works for all other members.

49. What did I wish to explain by this? That also in the Church the members spiritually support one another.

50. In what matters especially should we help one another? In those things which serve to promote virtue and sanctity.

51. What then is the doctrine of the Communion of Saints for us? It is a consoling and joyful doctrine.

52. For what reason? Because we are not only united with the faithful on earth, but also with the saints in heaven and the souls in purgatory.

53. For what other reason? Because we can assist the souls in purgatory, and because when we ourselves shall be in purgatory others will be able to help us by prayer, alms and other good works.

54. If all Christians belong to the Communion of Saints, what should this also teach us? It should also teach us never to despise or offend any one of our brethren in Christ.

55. If we really desire to belong to the Communion of Saints, how must we live? We must live as the saints did.

56. What is the application? We should daily pray for our fellow Christians, as well for those who are militating on earth as for those suffering in purgatory, and recommend ourselves every morning and night to the protection of the saints in heaven.

XXXVII.

The Tenth Article of the Creed: "The Forgiveness of Sins."

Dear Children:—In to-day's instruction we come to the tenth article of faith, which treats of the forgiveness of sins.

What does the tenth article of the creed teach us?

It teaches us that in the Catholic Church we can obtain, through the merits of Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins and of the punishment due to sin. This article comprises, therefore, four things, namely:

1. That only in the Catholic Church can we obtain the forgiveness of our sins.

2. That the Catholic Church, through the merits of Jesus Christ, forgives sins.

3. That all sins without exception, and also

4. All the punishment due to sin can be forgiven.

For our conscience there is nothing so perturbing as the thought of sin committed, and of its consequences, as loss of grace, loss of the love and friendship of God, and failure of eternal happiness. It would be still more serious for us if there were no way by which the forgiveness of our sins could be obtained; for then we should be eternally lost. But Jesus the Son of God, who came into the world for the salvation of sinners, has left in His Church a means by which we, through the infinite merits of His bitter Passion and death, can obtain the forgiveness of our sins. He gave to the rulers of His Church and to their legitimate successors for all time this power with the words: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them. Everything that you shall bind on earth

shall be bound also in heaven, and everything that you shall loose on earth shall also be loosed in heaven."

In these words Jesus granted to His Church the power not only to forgive sins, but also to remit the punishment due to sin.

It is well to note here that sins are by this forgiveness not merely compensated for, or covered up, as heretics teach, but that they are completely forgiven, entirely effaced; blotted out as if they had never been committed. St. John refers to this great grace in which we participate through Jesus in the words: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world."

What sins can be forgiven in the Catholic Church? All sins without exception.

Be the sin, therefore, ever so grievous, the sinner can obtain the forgiveness of the same in the Catholic Church: for Jesus has granted to this Church unlimited power and authority. This power is not confined to certain place, a certain time, or to certain kinds of sins, but everywhere, at all times, and for all sins the sinner can obtain forgiveness and pardon. There can, therefore, be no sin imagined, no matter how vile and wicked, which the Church can not remit or forgive; the sinner, furthermore, can be forgiven not only once, but repeatedly. To Peter's question: "Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother if he offends me?" Jesus answered, "Not only seven times, but seventy times seven." Of the fact that even the greatest sinners may be converted and sanctified we have many examples.

St. Augustine, for instance, belonged for many years to the heretical sect of the Manicheans and led a sinful life, yet later he became a saint. St. Margaret of Cortona led a life of sin for many years, and afterward became a great saint.

There is a certain passage of Scripture which apparently is contrary to our belief that all sins can be forgiven. It says: "Whosoever blasphemes against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven."

According to the explanation of the Fathers this passage of Scripture has the following meaning: As without the grace of the Holy Ghost no conversion is possible, so those who wilfully resist the Holy Spirit will, through their own fault, prevent the forgiveness of their sins.

What must the sinner do in order to obtain forgiveness of his sins?

1. He must truly repent: and 2. He must worthily receive the Sacraments instituted by Christ for the remission of sins.

Above all it is indispensable that the sinner should repent, and the repentance must be true and sincere.

True repentance consists in this, that the sinner acknowledges the hideousness of sin, and his guilt in revolting against God, accompanied by the wish that he had never sinned. Furthermore there is necessary to true repentance the resolution never more to sin, never to offend God again, and also to make complete satisfaction, which means that every injury caused to our fellow men by our sin must be compensated for and restitution made according to our ability. Insincere or pretended repentance is hypocrisy, and useless. The second condition which the sinner must fulfil is that he must receive worthily the sacraments instituted for the forgiveness of sins.

Which sacraments are instituted by Christ for the remission of sins?

The Sacraments of Baptism and Penance. By the Sacrament of Baptism original sin is remitted, and, for adults, also actual sin, and by penance the sins committed after Baptism. Sin is deadly poison for the soul; for it brings about spiritual death. Now, as with a man who has been poisoned, the first thing to be done to save his life is to remove the poison; so in order to save a sinful soul from eternal death, it must in the first place be cleansed from the poison of sin.

Who has power to forgive sin in the Sacrament of Penance?

The bishops, as the legitimate successors of the apostles, and the priests of the Catholic Church ordained by the bishops. Christ has conferred upon His apostles the twofold power to forgive sins, and to confer this power upon others, with the words: "As the Father has sent me, so do I also send you."

Why can we obtain only in the Catholic Church forgiveness of sins?

Because the forgiveness of sins is a work of the Holy Ghost, and Christ only promised and sent the Holy Ghost to the Church established by Him. If we reflect of what an infinite grace we are made partakers by being freed from sin, we can not thank God enough for His mercy. Remember, dear children, that you will have to ask yourselves at the hour of death, "What will be my sentence before the Divine Judge?" Think of this frequently now, while the forgiveness of your sins is within your reach, and go often, and gladly, always with proper preparation, to confession, so that the Judge may say to you also: "Go in peace; thy sins are

forgiven thee." To go gladly to confession, means to do so with willingness, not because you are forced to do so. That which we do simply because we are forced to do so, and which we do not like to do, is usually not done as it should be done. The law of the Church is that we go to confession at least once a year.

This commandment is given for lukewarm Christians, who possibly without this commandment would not go to confession at all. Our holy religion teaches us that only the good which we accomplish while in a state of grace is meritorious before God. From this it will be evident to you how necessary it is to put one's self frequently in the state of God's grace, by the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

You should, furthermore, remember that you are liable to die at any moment. How terrible must be the sinner's lot who stands before God's judgment in a state of mortal sin! You must never approach the Sacrament of Penance without a thorough preparation, because this is not an ordinary but a most important affair, and of great consequence for our salvation. As you will learn later on, the unworthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance is a most wicked and sacrilegious act, of which most surely you would not wish to be guilty.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What is the tenth article of the creed? The tenth article of the creed is "the forgiveness of sins."

2. What does this article teach us? It teaches us that in the Catholic Church we can obtain, through the merits of Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins and of the punishment due to sin.

3. What then do we confess in the tenth article? We believe and confess: 1. That there is a forgiveness of sins; 2. That only the Catholic Church, through the merits of Jesus Christ, can remit sins; 3. That all sins without exception can be remitted, and 4. That with the sin, the punishment due to it can also be forgiven.

4. What is sin? Sin is the voluntary offending of God.

5. How does this offending of God take place? By the transgressing of a divine commandment.

6. Can a person in the state of sin be saved? Holy Scripture says: "Nothing unclean can enter into heaven."

7. Is there no means whereby we can betake ourselves from the state of disgrace to the state of grace? that is to say, from the state of God's displeasure into His favor again? Yes; by having our sins forgiven us.

8. Who has power to remit or to forgive sins? The Catholic Church alone has this power.

9. From whom did she receive this power? From Jesus Christ.

10. How do you know this? From Holy Scripture.

11. Quote the particular passage. Before His ascension Jesus breathed upon His apostles and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they shall be forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain they shall be retained."

12. One might suppose, however, that Jesus had conferred the power to forgive sins only upon His apostles? No; Jesus conferred this power also upon the successors of the apostles.

13. How may we know this? Because Jesus desired that His Church should continue until the end of the world.

14. What is necessary therefore? That the authority and power in His Church should also continue until the end of the world.

15. The question now arises, Are our sins, as heretics affirm, only covered up or are they really forgiven? They are really forgiven, not merely covered up.

16. What does this mean? They are completely forgiven us; they are wiped out; they are as if they had never been committed.

17. What reference does St. John, the precursor of Jesus, make concerning the forgiveness of sins? John said: "Behold the Lamb of God! who taketh away the sins of the world."

18. Why is Jesus described as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world? Because Jesus has rendered satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, for the sins of all mankind.

19. How do we confess, therefore, the forgiveness of sins? We confess that it takes place through the merits of Jesus Christ.

20. What sins can be remitted in the Catholic Church? All sins, without exception, can be remitted.

21. How did I explain this more clearly to you? There is no sin so grievous but that the sinner can receive forgiveness of the same.

22. Mention a very grievous sin. Blasphemy, perjury.

23. Name some others. Murder, suicide, incendiarism.

24. Can these grievous sins also be forgiven? Yes; they, too, can be forgiven.

25. At what time can sins be forgiven? They can be forgiven at all times.

26. In what place can they be forgiven? In all places, everywhere.

27. How often can the sinner obtain forgiveness of his sins? As often as he wants to.

28. How can you prove this to me? From Holy Scripture. When Peter asked our Divine Saviour: "Lord, how often must I forgive my brother when he has offended me? seven times?" Thereupon Jesus answered: "Not alone seven times, but seventy times seven."

29. What example did I give you showing that a very great sinner could obtain forgiveness and remission of his sins? St. Augustine and St. Margaret of Cortona.

30. What did I tell you about St. Augustine? St. Augustine belonged many years to the heretical sect of the Manicheans, he led a sinful life, and yet afterward became a great saint.

31. We have just heard that all sins without exception can be forgiven. There is a passage of Scripture, however, which says: "Whoever blasphemes the Holy Ghost will not be forgiven." Is not this a contradiction? No; it is not a contradiction.

32. What then is the meaning of this Scriptural passage? That as without the grace of the Holy Ghost, without His illumination no conversion is possible, so those who wilfully oppose the Holy Ghost prevent the remission of their sins by their own fault.

33. What, then, must the sinner do on his part to obtain the remission of his sins? He must: 1. Be truly repentant, and 2. He must worthily receive the sacraments instituted by Christ for the remission of sins.

34. What, then, is the first requisite on the part of the sinner? He must truly repent.

35. In what consists true repentance? The sinner must above all realize the hideousness and horror of his sins.

36. What else? He must acknowledge his guilt in rebelling and revolting against his God.

37. What will arise from this knowledge? A feeling of contrition.

38. What is contrition? Contrition is a heartfelt sorrow for the sin committed.

39. Those who feel a profound contrition will make what resolution? They will make a resolution to sin no more.

40. What else belongs to true repentance? The desire to repair every injury caused by our sin to our neighbor.

41. In what way can we injure our neighbor? We can injure his honor, his life, his health, his fortune, and so forth.

42. How do we injure our neighbor's honor? When we say something about him that we ought not to say.

43. How can we injure his health, his fortune, etc.? By injuring his body or causing him a sickness.

44. What is contrary to true repentance? A false repentance.

45. What is a false repentance? Pretending externally to be truly repentant.

46. What is this also called? Hypocrisy.

47. If, then, true repentance is necessary for the forgiveness of our sins, what must we think of a false repentance? That those who are not truly repentant do not obtain the forgiveness of their sins.

48. What else must the sinner do to obtain the forgiveness of his sins? He must worthily receive the sacraments instituted by Christ for the remission of sins.

49. What sacraments were instituted by Christ for the remission of sins? The Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

50. What sins are remitted by Baptism? All sins original and actual.

51. What sins are remitted by the Sacrament of Penance? Sins committed after Baptism.

52. How ought the Christian to receive both these Sacraments? He should receive them worthily, with the necessary preparation.

53. When is the Sacrament of Penance received unworthily? 1. When the penitent has no contrition for the sins he has committed; 2. When he, through lack of contrition, does not prepare himself properly, and 3. When he knowingly omits a grievous sin.

54. What do those who receive the Sacrament of Penance unworthily? They commit a sacrilege.

55. To what did I compare the sinner? To a person who has been poisoned.

56. What may we lose by poison? Our natural life.

57. What does man lose by sin? His supernatural life, the grace of God.

58. What, then, is sin for the soul? Sin is poison for the soul.

59. Now, if the soul desires to regain its supernatural life, the grace of God, what must be done with sin? It must be removed from the soul.

60. By which two sacraments does this take place? By the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

61. Who has the power to remit sins in the Sacrament of Penance? The bishops of the Catholic Church and the priests ordained by them.

62. From whom have they received this power? From the apostles and their legitimate successors.

63. Now, if Jesus had not instituted the holy Sacraments of Baptism and Penance what would have been the sad consequences for us? We should all have died in our sins, and no one after committing a grievous sin could have been saved.

64. What has Jesus proved for us by the institution of these sacraments? Jesus has proved thereby His great love of us.

65. What do we owe Him for this? We owe Him deep gratitude.

66. How ought we particularly to show this gratitude? By receiving gladly, often, and worthily the Sacrament of Penance.

67. How often should a good Christian go to confession? A good Christian should confess his sins frequently.

68. The commandment of the Church, however, says: At least once a year. For whom is this meant? This commandment is only meant for lukewarm Christians.

69. Why is it necessary to confess our sins frequently? Because all the good that we do has only merit before God when it is done in a state of grace.

70. For what other reason? To avoid in the case of sudden death the fearful fate of approaching God's tribunal laden with sins.

71. What else is forgiven besides sin? With the sin is also remitted the punishment due to sin.

72. What punishments are remitted at the same time as the sins? The eternal punishments, the pains of hell.

73. Which punishments are not always remitted with the sins? The temporal punishments are not always remitted.

74. How may we principally obtain remission of the temporal punishment? By the gaining of indulgences.

In conclusion I wish to exhort you most fervently also after you leave school to receive the Sacrament of Penance frequently, willingly, and worthily. Children who join a sodality will not fail to approach the sacraments regularly, because they will be reminded of this duty by their spiritual director. You certainly have all experienced a feeling of joy and peace when the priest said to you: "Thy sins are forgiven thee!"

This grace, however, is the fruit only of a worthy reception. Prepare yourselves, then, to receive worthily the Holy Sacrament of Penance. Examine your conscience carefully, arouse true contrition, make a firm resolution to sin no more, and strive in every way to make good the injury caused by your sins. Then will the Sacrament of Penance be for you really a sacrament of the forgiveness of sin.

XXXVIII.

The Eleventh Article of the Creed: "The Resurrection of the Body."

Dear Children:—In to-day's instruction we reach the eleventh article of the creed, which confesses the resurrection of the body.

This article refers firstly to death, and secondly to the resurrection after death. Let us first learn something about death. In a former lesson we learned that God created the body of the first man out of the slime of earth, and to give it life breathed an immortal soul into it. The life of man, therefore, consists of the union of an immortal soul and a mortal body.

What happens when man dies? The soul separates from the body and appears before the judgment seat of God, while the body is returned to the earth. There is also a death of the soul, namely, when it loses the grace of God and is in a state of disgrace. There is also an eternal death, the damnation of hell, but to-day we will speak of the natural death, the death of the body. Death is a

separation of the soul from the body, a removal of the immortal soul from its mortal abode, the body.

We make a difference between a natural and an unnatural death, between a hard and an easy death, between a happy and an unhappy death. If a person dies of a previous sickness or of old age, we say he died a natural death. If one commits suicide by hanging, or shooting, or poisoning himself, or if he is killed in an unexpected or in a sudden and forcible manner, we call it an unnatural death.

We call it a hard death when the separation of soul and body is preceded by a violent or protracted agony; on the contrary, if a death is like a peaceful and gradual falling off into sleep, we call such death an easy death.

We call it a happy death if the dying person has prepared himself by receiving the grace of God through the Holy Sacraments; and an unhappy one if a person dies unprepared and in sin.

Sleep is a picture of death. As man, tired and fatigued by the day's cares and toil, longs for repose, so does man, after the weary turmoil of life, long for rest and reunion with God. Just as we relax into slumber gradually and slowly, so does in our old age our strength gradually decrease until we finally die. Just as in the fall the trees die off, as leaf after leaf withers and flutters to the ground, so do the powers of soul and body of man grow weaker and weaker, less and less, until death takes place.

To good people death is a return to their home. Take, for example, some one who in the days of his youth had lost father and mother, and had to go away from home to earn his living by toil and labor. Finally his earnings enable him to return to his home. How he rejoices long before even, when he thinks of the day on which he will start upon his journey, how hurriedly he undertakes it, how he counts the days and hours which it will take to bring him back to his beloved home. Finally he sees in the distance the cherished place, the church where he said his prayers as a child, the spots where he played with his young companions, the old house where his parents lived and where he was born, the little churchyard where his dear parents lie buried! Oh, how his heart beats for joy, and how he kneels down to kiss the very soil which is so dear and precious to him!

With just such joy in his heart the good man returns to his God. Oh, how he, too, longs for peace after life's great turmoil, and how

he is filled with joy at the thought of resting in heaven after the long battle of life!

But whether man dies willingly or unwillingly, whether he awaits death with joy or dread, all this makes no difference. Every man, no matter what he is, must die. Holy Scripture says: "It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment." Death pays as little regard to its victims as the reaper does to the grass and flowers which are cut down by his sharp scythe. Young and old, high and low, rich and poor, princes and beggars, all alike must die.

Why must all men die? Because all have sinned in Adam. This means, in other words: "Because death, as a punishment for Adam's sin, has descended upon all his successors. Originally the human body was not destined for death, but for immortality. God warned Adam: "If thou shalt eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, thou shalt die."

Do we know anything about our death? We know neither the time, nor the place, nor the manner of our death. There is only one thing we know, that of a certainty we must die. Death may come at eve, it may come at night, it may come at morn.

In His wisdom God has denied us all knowledge as to the time of our death. Firstly, so that each man should live so as to be prepared to die at any moment. Jesus has explained this to us in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, of which I have spoken to you on a former occasion.

Secondly, so that we should honor and fear God as master over life and death; and, thirdly, to mitigate that dread and fear which ever accompanies the thought of approaching death. If we knew the hour of death, there would be no joy in life. Dejected, sorrowful, and disconsolate we should pass our days, and the nearer the day and hour of death would approach, the greater fear would take possession of us.

How should we prepare ourselves for death? By avoiding sin and leading a good life. He who is laden with sin can not enter heaven. He who has done no good works in this world, who has been but lukewarm in faith. Man should therefore not only live free from sin, but he should also lead a good and fruitful life, i. e., perform good works. For some men death is terrible, for others it is not. He who lives in sin and vice will naturally be afraid of death. He who has always endeavored to do good

will rejoice when the hour of death approaches, for he knows that God will reward him.

To the wicked man death is terrible, because, 1. When he looks into the past he sees nothing but folly, sin, and vice; 2. His present is for him no consolation, and there is no hope in his heart, nothing but shame, fear, sorrow, anguish, and despair. 3. In looking into the future he sees himself before the gates of eternity; he knows that in a few days or months he will be called before the judgment seat of a just and terrible Judge, where eternal punishment will be his sentence.

How terrible the death of wicked and sinful people is we may see in the death of Herod. This cruel man, who caused the children of Bethlehem to be murdered, became afflicted with a terrible sickness; foul sores, filled with worms, covered his body, so that in despair he even tried to take his own life.

How does the good Christian die? 1. With resignation to the will of God, for he knows that all God does is for the best. A good Christian speaks like Job: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." 2. With thankfulness for the benefits received during life for soul and body. 3. With repentance for sins committed, and 4. Fortified and consoled by the Holy Sacraments.

The certainty of death on the one hand, and the uncertainty of the time of our death on the other, should admonish us to think of death very frequently.

Some holy men, acknowledging the necessity of thinking of death frequently, kept a skull constantly placed before them. The sight of this skull should constantly remind them of their own death.

Other pious men had an open coffin placed by their bedsides as a constant reminder of death. St. John, bishop of Alexandria, had his grave dug within sight from his windows, so as to be constantly reminded of death.

Whenever we see a body carried to the grave we should think: "Maybe I shall be next." When at night we lie down to rest we should remember that we may not awake in the morning. When a new year commences it may be the last of our life.

See, my dear children, how wholesome it is for us, this thought of death and the grave, and there is no sight so beneficial for us as the sight of the dying or of the dead. Mute lies the body before you, and yet it preaches in loud tones: "Remember that thou must die."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What is the eleventh article of the creed? The eleventh article of the creed is "The Resurrection of the Body."

2. What does the eleventh article treat of? It treats of death and the resurrection after death.

3. We therefore first learned something about death. Tell me what does man consist of? Man consists of body and soul.

4. What difference is there between body and soul? The soul is invisible but the body is visible.

5. Tell me of another difference? The body is mortal, the soul is immortal.

6. What do body and soul form by their union? They form living man.

7. How is this union broken? By death.

8. What happens at the death of man. The soul separates from the body, and appears before the judgment seat of God, the body returns to earth.

9. Is there also a death of the soul? Yes; there is also a death of the soul.

10. What is understood by the death of the soul? When the soul is in a state of disgrace and has lost the grace of God.

11. Can the soul of man die in the same way as his body dies, that is, lose its life and existence? No; the soul can not die as a body dies.

12. Why not? Because it is an immortal spirit.

13. What death have we spoken of to-day? Of the death of the body.

14. What is meant by the death of the body? Death is the separation of the soul from the body.

15. In what other way can you express this? Death is a removal of the immortal soul from its mortal abode, the body.

16. How do we distinguish between different kinds of death? There is a distinction between a natural and an unnatural death, between a hard and an easy death, between a happy and an unhappy death.

17. What do we call a natural death? We call it a natural death if a person dies of sickness or of old age.

18. When do we call death unnatural? When a person loses life in an unforeseen or violent manner.

19. For instance? If a person is murdered or commits suicide.

20. When do we call death hard? When death is preceded by a painful and protracted agony.

21. What do we call an easy death? When it follows a peaceful or gradual falling off, as into sleep.

22. What do we understand by a happy death? A death prepared for by the reception of the Holy Sacraments.

23. What is an unhappy death? When a person dies suddenly and in the state of sin.

24. What picture of death did I use? Sleep is a picture of death.

25. What do we know of ourselves when we are asleep? We know nothing of ourselves.

26. Do we hear or see anything? No; we do not hear or see anything.

27. What happens when our sleep is ended? We awake.

28. Will there also be an awakening after death? Yes; there will be an awakening after death.

29. On what day will all the dead awake? On the Day of Judgment.

30. When do you sleep well and sound, and enjoy sleep? When I have worked hard and feel very tired.

31. What men, therefore, will rejoice in death? Those men who have performed much good in this life.

32. What other picture of death can you give me? The trees in fall.

33. What happens to the trees in fall, what change takes place in them? They lose their leaves and their life.

34. What happens when spring comes again? Leaves and blossoms appear again on these trees.

35. To what have I compared the death of a good man? To the return of a wanderer to his home.

36. With what feelings does a man return to his home? With feelings of joy.

37. How much greater then must be his joy if he knows that upon his return a loving father and mother will welcome him. Are we welcomed in heaven by a loving Father? Yes; by our Heavenly Father.

38. Therefore, with what feeling does a good man look forward to death? With a feeling of joy.

39. If a person has led a wicked life, does such a person await death with joy? No; such a person dreads death.

40. Is there any human being known who will not die? No such being exists.

41. Why not? Because all men must die.

42. Why must all men die? Because all men have sinned in Adam.

43. Have you ever seen death depicted? Yes; I have seen death depicted.

44. What did it look like? It looked like a skeleton, holding in one hand an hour glass and in the other a scythe.

45. What does the hour glass signify? It signifies the hour of our death.

46. What does the scythe signify? It signifies that death spares no one.

47. What does the skeleton mean? It shows the state man will be in after death, when decomposition has taken place.

48. Was mankind originally destined to die? No; man was not originally destined to die.

49. How can you prove this in Scripture? God warned Adam: "If you eat of the forbidden tree, you shall surely die."

50. What do we know of our death? We know neither place, nor time, nor the manner of our death.

51. How may we die? We may die a natural or an unnatural or violent death, we may die prepared or unprepared, a hard or an easy death.

52. What do we know of a certainty, however? That we must die some day.

53. Why has God hidden from man all knowledge as to where, how, and when he will die? So that he may keep himself always prepared for death.

54. For what other reason? So that we may honor and fear God as the Lord of life and death.

55. What is the third reason? To avoid that dread and fear which accompanies the thought of approaching death.

56. If we knew the time or place of our death what would be the consequences? We should be dejected, disconsolate, and full of despair.

57. How should man prepare himself for death? By avoiding sin and doing good works.

58. Is it then not enough to be free from sin? No; it is not enough to be free from sin.

59. What more does God require of man? God requires good works.

60. In what parable has Jesus shown us this? In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.

61. What is death for the wicked man? It is terrible.

62. Can you give me any example from history how terrible death is for the godless. Yes; Herod.

63. What do you know of Herod? Herod had the children of Bethlehem murdered. He was afflicted with a terrible sickness, during which foul sores, filled with worms, covered his body, so that in despair he even tried to take his own life.

64. How should a good Christian die? With resignation to the will of God.

65. How should we express this resignation? Blessed be the will of God.

66. What also should a good Christian do when dying? He should thank God for the benefits received for soul and body.

67. How should he also die? With repentance for sins committed, and strengthened through the Holy Sacraments.

68. Which are the sacraments which a dying Christian may and should receive? The Sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist, and of Extreme Unction.

69. What should we do so that death may not find us unprepared? We should often think of death.

70. What did some saints do to remind themselves continually of death? They placed a skull in their cells.

71. What did other pious persons do for the same purpose? They had a coffin put by their bedside.

72. On what occasions are we particularly reminded of death? When somebody is being carried to the grave.

73. What should we think of then? That ours may be the next body to be carried to the grave.

74. What should we think when we lie down to rest at night? We should remember that we may not awake in the morning.

75. What should we think when a new year commences? We should think that it may be the last year of our life.

76. If a friend of yours dies, what should you do? We should go and view the remains.

77. What will the sight of the corpse be for you? It will be a wholesome sight.

78. What resolution would you form at the sight of the dead? The resolution to live so that I might die a happy death.

Let me remind you in conclusion, my dear children, to think often of your death, and live so that you may be prepared at any

moment to die, and that you need not be afraid of death. To the good and just the thought of death has nothing terrible; to him death comes as a dear friend to reunite him to his God. And just as a child rejoices to meet his father, so will you rejoice some day to be united with your heavenly Father. Amen.

XXXIX.

Continuation of the Eleventh Article.

Dear Children:—In our last instruction we heard that at death man's soul is separated from his body. The body returns again to earth, the soul appears before the tribunal of God.

How long does the body remain in the earth? The body will remain in the earth until the day of judgment, when God will raise it again and unite it to the soul from which it was separated at death.

What do we call this raising of the body to life? The resurrection of the body.

The word resurrection means the return from death to life, the restoration of the body and the reunion of the same with the soul. The same being which existed before death will then be restored again.

We distinguish a twofold resurrection: a material and a spiritual resurrection. The spiritual resurrection of man consists in this that, illumined and animated by the Holy Spirit, he is converted from sin to a holy life. This is the spiritual resurrection shown by Mary Magdalene, the penitent sinner. But here it is a question only of the resurrection of the body. Now a doubt may arise in the minds of some people as to the possibility of such resurrection. A soldier, for instance, has lost legs or arms upon the battle-field. They have been buried in unknown places. How can this body be again resurrected? A man dies at sea, his body is thrown into the water and eaten by the fishes. How is it possible that that man

can rise again? Answer: By God's omnipotence. Holy Writ says: "With God nothing is impossible." As illustrations of the resurrection I will name you the following: A grain of wheat is put in the earth seemingly dead and without life, yet it is brought back to life and brings forth new fruit of its kind. In the fall all nature dies, and in the winter lies there without life. As soon, however, as spring endows the rays of the sun with power, nature awakens to a new life, to new glory and beauty. The caterpillar becomes a chrysalis and prepares itself as for the grave. It dies an ugly worm and comes forth a beautiful butterfly.

The certainty of the resurrection is proved from Holy Scripture. Jesus says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment—i. e., to hear the sentence of condemnation."

Even in the faith of the pagans traces may be found of a belief in the resurrection of the body. The Egyptians took the greatest pains to preserve the bodies of the dead from decay by embalming them. Why should they have held the bodies of the dead in such great veneration if they beheld in them nothing but a handful of dust?

Other pagans believe in a migration of souls, a belief due to an instinctive idea that the soul does not die. As they have no better explanation as to where the soul goes after death, they believe that it wanders about from one body to another.

For what reason shall our bodies rise again?

1. That they may be partakers in the reward or punishment due to the partner and instrument of the soul in the performance of good or evil. The justice of God requires that not only the soul but also the body shall receive reward or punishment, because it has been the instrument of the soul and cooperated with it in good or evil. The hand gave alms to the poor, the lips consoled the suffering, the feet went into the squalid homes of the poor and needy, the mouth has prayed and praised God, the ears have listened gladly to the word of God, the eyes have taken pleasure in the reading of good books, etc. It is therefore just and right that the body which has taken part in good and noble actions should also receive the reward merited.

In the actions of sinful persons body and soul have also acted together. The hand has been stretched out after unjust gain, the hand of the thief has stolen, the hand of the murderer has killed, the mouth has lied, sworn to false oaths, talked immoral language, sung disreputable songs, blasphemed God, cursed, etc. The ears have listened willingly to sinful conversations, to wicked stories and songs, the feet have carried the unjust to places of wickedness; justice, therefore, requires that the body should participate with the soul in its punishment.

2. That Christ's victory over death may be complete. The complete victory of Christ consisted therein that He overcame the twofold death which had come into the world by the sin of our first parents, in order to give man again the lost twofold life: the eternal life of the soul after its spiritual death due to sin, and the immortality of the body. By the resurrection of the dead to eternal life the victory of Christ over sin and death is completed. After the last general resurrection of the dead on judgment day there will be no more death.

Shall all men rise from the dead? Yes; all men, the good as well as the bad.

Through the sin of our first parents all men must die, and through Christ all will live again, the just as well as the sinner, all without exception.

Will the bodies of the risen be all alike? No; the bodies of the wicked shall be hideous and miserable, but those of the good shall be glorious, and like unto the glorified body of Christ.

(a) The bodies of the wicked will be miserable. They will indeed arise immortal and indestructible, but they will bear the marks of vice and sin upon them, they will be hideous, and the sight of them will be a horror for all eternity.

(b) The bodies of the good will be glorified, filled with beauty and splendor, like unto the glorified body of Jesus. Holy Writ says: "The bodies of the just shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father." This glorification will be different in degree, according to the degrees of merit. "Some will have the glory of the sun, others that of the moon, others that of the stars."

What are the qualities with which the bodies of the blessed shall be adorned?

1. Incapability of suffering. They will no longer be subject to pain and infirmities.

2. They will be glorious, brilliant, shining like the sun, like the glorified body of Jesus.

3. Power and endurance. "Our body is sown in weakness; it shall rise in power."

4. With subtility and spirituality. "It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body."

What should the belief in the resurrection of the body work in us?

1. It should incite us to respect our body and never to abuse it by sinning. Our eyes should turn away so as not to see anything wicked. The mouth should not lie, or curse, or swear falsely, or calumniate, etc. The ears should be closed to all bad conversations. The hands should not grasp after the goods of others, the hands should not be raised to bad deeds, nor to ill-treat others. The feet should not take us where evil dwells. Holy Writ says: "The Temple of God is holy and that are ye." For this reason our body is sanctified in holy Baptism.

2. It should be our consolation at the death of our relatives and friends. Separation by death is only temporary. How consoling is the thought that in the next world we shall see one another again, that there we shall be united to one another, never more to part.

3. We should respect the bodies of the dead. If the Church herself honors the bodies of the departed, buries them in consecrated earth, and causes them to be blessed by the priest before burial, we should be admonished thereby to remember that the bodies of the dead are destined for everlasting resurrection, and that they should be treated, therefore, with the greatest respect.

(A few questions will suggest themselves here to the Catechist.)

XL.

Twelfth Article of the Creed: "And Life Everlasting, Amen."

Dear Children:—In the explanation of the Catechism we come to-day to the doctrine of eternal life which is contained in the twelfth article of the creed. It says: "And life everlasting."

That is to say: "I believe in a life everlasting." The life of man is a twofold one: the life of the body and the life of the soul. The life of the body will, as we have already learned, be interrupted for a time by death, and then it will begin anew, never to end. But the life of the soul will never be interrupted; it lasts forever, eternally. Persons without faith deny that the soul will continue to live after the death of the body. They place man upon a level with the animal, and say: "When the body dies the soul dies with it, the same as in an animal." The reason why these persons wish to deny the immortality of the soul is evident. A severe judge awaits them after their indifferent or sinful lives, a strict judgment and may be a terrible punishment. This thought is unpleasant to them, and consequently they would like to deny that the soul lives on after death.

What do we confess in the twelfth article of the creed?

1. That after this life there is another, which will last forever; and 2. That the just shall in the other life enjoy eternal happiness.

1. It is proved by Holy Scripture that there is an everlasting life. It says: "The just shall go into life everlasting" (Matt. xxv. 46). Of Jesus Holy Scripture says: "He will rule in the house of Jacob eternally, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

2. In order that the happiness of heaven should be perfect it is absolutely necessary that it should last forever; for if it did not endure forever the blessed would fear to lose heaven again, and perfect bliss can not be mingled with fear.

Can we understand this eternal happiness? No; the happiness of heaven is so great that it exceeds all that can be said or imagined. Holy Scripture even does not undertake or attempt to describe the magnitude of heavenly bliss in words; it only says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (I. Cor. ii. 9).

The joys of heaven are spiritual; they can not be compared to those of this world, which are mostly material. Every attempt, therefore, to depict the joys of heaven in words would be in vain.

The supreme happiness of the blessed consists in their intimate and eternal union with God, whom they behold face to face, whom they glorify, praise, and adore. To this bliss of the vision of God is added the cessation of all sufferings and tribulations that earth caused them, and the certainty that no one can deprive them

of the happiness of heaven or take it away from them. Jesus said in the eight Beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." In this heavenly bliss all the angels, saints, martyrs, virgins, and all the choirs of blessed spirits participate.

The happiness of heaven finally is not clouded by fear of sin. In heaven there are no more snares, no more temptations, no more falls. The sister of St. Thomas Aquinas once asked her brother in what the eternal bliss of heaven consisted. He answered her: "Dear sister, you will not obtain the answer to this question until you yourself have attained eternal happiness." However (if we may dare say so), God has given us a foretaste of the happiness of heaven. Dear children, when you shall be united to Jesus in Holy Communion, and also when you perform some good deed, then you will feel within you a delight, a happiness, unutterable satisfaction; this is, as it were, a slight foretaste of heaven.

St. Catherine of Genoa was privileged in a moment of ecstasy to behold the glory of heaven. When her confessor desired her to describe the same, she could find no words but these: "I have seen wonders!"

Will all the blessed be happy in the same degree? No; for every one shall receive the reward according to his labor, i. e., his deserts. Those who labor more diligently will receive a greater reward than those who do not work so diligently. Besides, God has endowed some persons with a greater proportion of graces than He has others. The former consequently are expected to do more good than the latter.

The belief in heavenly bliss should incite us:

1. To live a life that leads to heaven, and to strive to attain it;

2. To despise the joys and goods of this world and not to forsake heaven for them. Such who do this are, for instance, the avaricious, whose money is their god; the glutton, whose god is his belly.

3. To endure patiently the sufferings of this world, because by them we are purified and rendered worthy of heaven.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. What is the twelfth article of the creed? "And life everlasting. Amen."

2. Is there then another life besides life everlasting? Yes; the natural or temporal life.

3. In what way do they differ? The natural life will one day be ended by death, but eternal life will never end.

4. When does natural life begin? When man is born.

5. When does natural life cease, and eternal life begin? When man dies.

6. When will the soul be reunited to the body? At the Day of Judgment.

7. When will this union cease? This union will never cease.

8. What is it called? Eternal life.

9. What do unbelievers say concerning the immortality of the soul? They say that when the body dies the soul dies with it.

10. With which creatures is this the case? With animals.

11. To what then do unbelievers compare themselves? To animals.

12. Why do unbelievers strive to deny the immortality of the soul and everlasting life? Because they fear eternity.

13. Why do they fear it? Because they are wicked, and they expect to be punished in the other life.

14. What effect has this thought, this consciousness, upon them? It tortures them.

15. If unbelievers try to undermine your belief in a life everlasting what ought you to do? We must not listen to them.

16. What does the twelfth article of the creed mean? 1. That after this life there is another which will last forever. 2. That there the just shall enjoy eternal happiness.

17. How can you prove that there is an eternal life? By passages from Holy Scripture.

18. Mention them. "Every one that liveth and believeth in me shall not die forever," and "The just shall go into everlasting life."

19. Why is it necessary that the happiness of the just should last forever? Because otherwise the blessed would fear to lose their happiness.

20. Could there be perfect bliss if fear were present? No; there would not be perfect bliss.

21. Can we comprehend and describe this bliss. No; the greatness of heavenly happiness exceeds anything that we can imagine.

22. What says Holy Scripture concerning heavenly bliss? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him."

23. What does Holy Scripture give us to understand by this? That this heavenly bliss can not be described.

24. In what does the happiness of heaven consist? In this that the blessed behold God face to face, that they glorify, praise, and adore Him for all eternity.

25. Which passage of Scripture refers to this? The one: "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face."

26. In what does the happiness of heaven also consist? In the cessation of all sufferings and tribulations.

27. How is the happiness of heaven further increased? By the consciousness of the blessed that no one can take their bliss away from them.

28. Who participate in the joys of heaven? The Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels, saints, martyrs, and all the choirs of blessed spirits.

29. How may we receive, as it were, a foretaste of heaven? When we unite ourselves to Jesus in Holy Communion.

30. When else? When we perform a good deed.

31. Will all blessed be equally happy in heaven? No; but every one will be rewarded according to his works, i. e., his deserts.

32. To take an example for this from real life, let us suppose that you have two laborers; the one has been in your service for six months, the other only three days. Would the latter be entitled to as much pay as the former? Certainly not.

33. What do we learn from this example? That God does not reward all the blessed in the same degree.

34. How does God mete out their reward to them? According to their deserts.

35. For what reason? Divine justice demands it.

36. To what should the thought of heaven incite us? To strive to attain heaven.

37. Upon whom does the obtaining of this happiness depend? Upon every person—him or herself.

38. What must you do to obtain heaven? I must live and do good according to the will of God, and shun evil.

39. How is this easily accomplished? By God's grace.

40. What does the Apostle St. Paul say? "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

41. What does Jesus Himself say of the fulfilling of the Divine will? "My yoke is sweet and my burden light."

42. To what does the thought of heaven further incite us? To despise the goods and joys of this world.

43. What are the goods of this world? Wealth, fortune, health and honor.

44. Why should we despise all temporal goods? Because they are valueless in heaven.

45. What goods does man take into eternity with him? The good works which he has done in this world.

46. Can you name a man in Bible history whose heart was set on temporal goods, whereby he lost heaven? The rich glutton.

47. What are those men called who are greedy for temporal goods? They are called avaricious.

48. What are those called whose thoughts and efforts are set upon eating, drinking, pleasures and good living? They are called gluttons.

49. What does Holy Scripture say of them? That their god is their belly.

50. If God has blessed us with temporal goods, how should we employ them? In doing good to the poor, and in practising good works.

51. How will that help us? It will help us in attaining everlasting happiness.

52. To what should belief in eternal happiness still further incite us? To bear patiently the sufferings of this world.

53. Mention some sufferings. Poverty, sickness, contempt, persecution, want, etc.

54. How ought we to bear the sufferings of this world? Patiently and with resignation to the Divine will.

55. To what then do sufferings serve when we bear them with patience and resignation? They serve for our good.

56. What have I repeatedly said of the path of suffering? The path of suffering is the road to heaven.

57. Can you give me two examples from Bible history? Job and Lazarus.
58. How did they bear the great sufferings that God sent them? With patience and resignation to the will of God.
59. Where did suffering lead them? Into heaven.

Now, there is not only an eternal life for the good, but also for the wicked.

The Catechism therefore asks: "What will be the life of the wicked through all eternity?" The answer says: "A life without grace or joy, a life full of the torments of hell."

I have already told you that hell is, first, a punishment of loss, the wicked being shut out from the vision of God and heavenly bliss. But it is also punishment of the senses, as the wicked in hell suffer much and severely. Where there is suffering no joys can reign. The torments of hell are all the more terrible because no grace, no release, no end can be thought of, and that the pains of hell will endure forever.

Who will be condemned to the pains of hell? All those who die at enmity with God, i. e., in a state of mortal sin.

The sinner renounces God. If he does not make use of the time of grace to reunite himself with God, and if he dies in mortal sin, he remains forever separated from God; for after death no conversion is possible. The Christian who dies in mortal sin resembles the branch torn from the vine, it will be thrown into the fire.

Hence do we know that there is a hell?

1. From Holy Scripture, and, 2. From reason. Holy Scripture speaks of the punishment of hell and says expressly that it will last forever. There must, therefore be the punishment of hell. At the last judgment our Divine Saviour will say to the wicked: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

In another part of Holy Scripture we read: "It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting than, having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished." These passages of Scripture not only prove the existence of a hell in general, but also the eternity of the torments of hell.

Reason tells us that there must be a hell. Much wickedness takes place in the world which remains unpunished in this life; there must, therefore, be a place, a state, where all the wickedness that has not been punished in this life may still be punished. Even

heathen nations have a belief in a place where the wicked must undergo everlasting punishment.

Beside Holy Scripture, also the explicit doctrine of the Catholic Church says that the torments of hell will last eternally, as was, for instance, defined at the councils of Constantinople and Trent.

As of heaven, so can man also have a slight foretaste of hell. Imagine to yourselves a criminal guilty of the greatest crimes. How must he feel, what awful torments must his bad conscience cause him! Day and night tormented by remorse he roams about restlessly, nowhere finding consolation, nowhere finding peace. The rustling of the leaves of a tree fills him with dread. Think of Cain. Scripture tells us: "He led a life that was worse than death."

Why are the torments of the damned eternal?

1. Because the offence against the infinite majesty of God demands of His justice a punishment without end;

2. Because all who die in sin remain eternally steeped in sin; and,

3. Because only the thought of the eternal pains of hell are a sufficient means to deter man from evil.

1. The majesty of God offended by sin is infinite, immeasurable. Hence he who dares to rebel against this infinite majesty, to rise against it, wilfully to offend it, must atone for it eternally. The malice of a mortal sin is endless; consequently, the punishment for it must also be without end.

2. Because all who die in sin remain eternally steeped in sin.

After death the sinner's reform and pardon are no longer possible. Only in this life does God grant us the grace of forgiveness; when we acknowledge our sins, repent, confess, and do penance for them. The sinner who dies in his sins is deprived of all this.

3. Because only the certainty of eternal punishment in hell is a sufficient means to deter man from evil.

If the torments of hell would only last for a time, like the punishment in purgatory, one would not be so careful to shun sin and vice.

But as God has placed eternal punishment upon grievous sin, the thought of the everlasting pains of hell is a means of deterring us from sins.

Will the pains of all the damned be equal? No; for each one will suffer in proportion to his sins, and according to the ill-use he has made of the graces granted to him.

As the rewards of the just in heaven differ in degree, so also do the punishments of the damned in hell differ. The justice of God demands it. He, the Omniscient, knows every evil deed, and the most secret intentions of men. He is therefore capable of measuring exactly the degree of culpability. As worldly justice is measured according to the degree of the crime, why should not the justice of God be so measured? The following sentence of Holy Scripture applies here: "God will render to every one according to his works."

Will all those who are damned be condemned through their own fault? Yes; for all men might be eternally happy if they availed themselves of the abundant graces which God gives them.

God has destined no one beforehand to the pains of hell. This is proven by the words of Scripture: "God will have all men to be saved." In order that they may be saved God has revealed to them His will, and offered them His graces. If man does not keep the commandments of God, if he does not make use of the means of grace, he must attribute the fruits and the consequences thereof to himself. If you should offer bread and meat to a starving man and he should obstinately refuse to accept them, would it be your fault or his if he should die of hunger?

So then God is not at fault when a sinner is eternally lost and condemned to the pains of hell. Holy Scripture expressly says: "God wills not the death of the sinner, but that he should be converted and live." We find this truth confirmed in the parables of the prodigal son and of the stray sheep.

"Before man is life and death, that which he shall choose shall be given him" (Ecclus. xv. 18). God placed us on the right road at the beginning of our lives. If we forsake the right path and go astray and thereby miss our goal, which is heaven, we have only to attribute it to ourselves.

What is understood by the four last things of man? We understand by the four last things: 1. Death, 2. Judgment, 3. Hell, and 4. Heaven.

Referring to these four last things which we have now considered during our course of instruction, we read in Holy Scripture: "Remember, O man, thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."

With what word do we conclude the Apostles' Creed? With the word "Amen," which means "so it is" or "so be it."

The word "Amen" is a solemn confession and confirming vow

that we believe without reserve everything which the Catholic Church presents for our belief in the Apostles' Creed, and that we also live according to this creed, that we finally make the resolution to remain faithful to the Catholic faith until death. Our faith must be firm as the rock upon which Christ built His Church.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A THOROUGH REHEARSING OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS LESSON.

1. After having heard what the eternal lot of the just is, I should now like to know what will be the eternal fate of the wicked. It will be a life without grace or joy, an existence in the torments of hell.

2. Why will the life of the wicked be without joy? Because in hell there is nothing but suffering and torment.

3. How may the pains of hell be described and divided? 1. Into the pain of loss, and 2. The pain of the senses.

4. Why is the torment of hell a pain of loss? Because the wicked are forever deprived of seeing God.

5. Why is it also a pain of the senses? Because the damned are made to suffer most severely.

6. By what are the torments of hell rendered still more terrible? By their lasting forever without end.

7. What does Holy Scripture say of hell? It calls it a fire that burns eternally, a worm that never dies, a darkness where there is perpetual weeping and gnashing of teeth.

8. What does Holy Scripture wish to imply by these expressions? The awful torments which the damned have to suffer in hell.

9. Who, then, will be condemned to the torments of hell? Every one who dies as the enemy of God, that is, who dies in mortal sin.

10. What does every grievous sin cause between God and man? It causes a separation.

11. How long does this separation last? Until the sinner is converted, repents and confesses his sins and amends.

12. If a man dies in a state of mortal sin can he not be converted to God in the next life? No; that is impossible in the next life.

13. How long, therefore, does the sinner remain separated from God in the world to come? For ever and ever.

14. Whence do we know that there is a hell and that its torments are eternal? From the passage of Scripture: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

15. Give another text. "It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting than, having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished."

16. What does reason tell us as to the existence of a hell? It tells us that there must be a hell.

17. Why must there be a hell? Because so much evil remains unpunished in this world.

18. What may we rightly conclude from this? That all wickedness will be punished in the next world.

19. In what way does the wicked man even in this world obtain a foretaste of the pains of hell? Through the tortures of his bad conscience.

20. Can you give me examples from Bible history? Cain and Judas.

21. Why are the torments of the damned eternal? Because the offence against the infinite majesty of God demands of His justice a punishment without end.

22. Why do we call God an infinite majesty? Because God is the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth, whose majesty we can not comprehend because it is infinite.

23. What does he deserve who dares to offend this infinite majesty of God intentionally? He deserves infinite punishment.

24. What ought to deter men from offending God? The respect, love, and gratitude that we owe to God.

25. Why do we owe God the greatest respect? Because He is the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth.

26. Why do we owe God the greatest love? Because He is the best of Fathers to us.

27. Why do we owe God the greatest gratitude? Because He is our greatest benefactor.

28. What is another reason why the torments of hell are eternal? Because all who die in sin remain forever in sin.

29. When is the conversion and amendment of the sinner alone possible? Only in this world.

30. What is the third reason why the pains of hell are eternal? Because only the certainty of everlasting punishment is a sufficient means to deter man from evil.

31. If the pains of hell only lasted for a time, what would the consequence be? Men would not be so careful to avoid sin.

32. Will the damned all suffer equally? No; each one will suffer in proportion to his guilt, and to the ill use he has made of the graces granted him.

33. Does God then know the sinful condition of every one? Yes; God knows it.

34. Why? Because God is omniscient.

35. Whose fault is it when any one is condemned to hell? It is man's own fault.

36. Is not God the cause? No; God is not the cause.

37. For what did God create all mankind? For eternal happiness.

38. What has God done in order that all mankind should obtain salvation? He has given them His commandments and means of grace.

39. What did God say when he gave the laws on Mount Sinai? God said: "I set before you blessing and curse; blessing if you obey, the curse if you do not obey."

40. From which passage of Scripture do we find that God wills not the damnation of a sinner? "God wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live."

41. In what parables is this confirmed? In the parables of the prodigal son and of the lost sheep.

42. What is understood by the Four Last Things of man? By the four last things we understand. 1. Death; 2. Judgment; 3. Hell, and 4. Heaven.

43. Why are they called the last things? Because they will be the last things that will happen to man.

44. To what should the remembrance of the last things incite us? To keep away from all sin.

45. What, therefore, should you do in order not to sin? We ought continually to remember the last things.

46. With what word do we conclude the Apostles' Creed? With the word "Amen," which means "So be it."

47. Why do we conclude the Apostles' Creed with this word? In order to declare that we firmly believe all that is contained in the twelve articles of the Creed, and that we are resolved to live according to this belief, and to die in it.

48. The word "amen," therefore, is partly a confirmation, partly a vow. How is it a confirmation? Because by it we profess that we believe everything which is contained in the Apostles' Creed.

49. How must we believe all this? Firmly and without doubt, just as the Catholic Church presents it for our belief.

50. How many vows are understood by this word "amen"? There are two: The first is that we will hold firmly to our Catholic belief, and the second that we will live according to the same.

51. What means to hold firmly to the Catholic belief? It means not to fall away from it

52. What means to live according to our faith? It means to live so as our faith prescribes.

In order that you may learn to live according to your faith, the doctrine of morals will now be taken up for our instruction, to follow the doctrine of faith, which we have so far considered and which we have now concluded. It remains for me to impress upon you most strongly that your Catholic belief is a precious jewel, given you by Jesus through His Church. Accept this gift of faith gratefully, regulate your life according to its teachings, and it will be for you the foundation stone of your eternal salvation.

(End of the instruction in the doctrine of faith. The following volume will be a course in the doctrine of morals.)

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